

Attempt to withdraw P100-M secret fund foiled

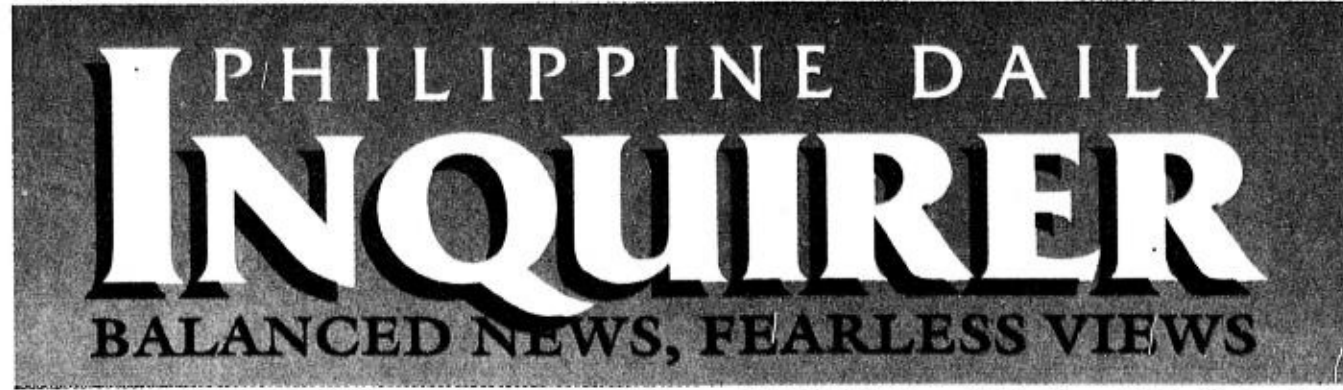
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FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2001 ★ 52 PAGES 4 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 49 P15

Church tells 11 'No' senators: Repent

BY NORMAN BORDADORA
APOLOGIZE and repent.

This was the message of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday to Senate Majority Leader Francisco Tatad and 10 other senator-judges who suppressed the evidence on deposed President Joseph Estrada's CHURCH/ A16

Estrada 'airplane accounts' uncovered

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL,
BLANCHE S. RIVERA
AND DONNA CUETO

SEVERAL "airplane" accounts also served as repositories for ousted President Joseph Estrada's alleged ill-gotten wealth, a former House prosecutor in the suspended impeachment trial of Estrada yesterday said.

"(He) even has what we call 'airplane accounts' because they are numbered after airplane types such as Account No. 747, Account No. 737, Account No. 727 for Boeing planes and Account No. 300 and Account No. 301 after Airbus airplanes," Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo said.

In a press conference, Arroyo said the "airplane" accounts were different from Estrada's accounts under assumed names such as Jose Velarde, Jose Marcelo, Kelvin Garcia and Jose Rizalista Marcelo.

Estrada also maintained a "three one eight" account. He could with-
ESTRADA/ A16

Erap free to leave RP, says DOJ

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada would be free to leave the Philippines if he wanted to live in exile, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday said.

Two days earlier, Perez issued a hold-departure order on Estrada, former first lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, their eldest son, San Juan Mayor Jingoy Estrada, and 21 others.

Perez flip-flopped after the Integrated Bar of the Philippines issued a statement that banning Estrada from leaving the country was unconstitutional.

But militant groups said Estrada should be barred from leaving the country so that he could be punished for his alleged crimes.

The groups said allowing Estrada to leave the country "will ERAP/ A6

Cabinet appointees alarm civil society

'Her debts are to the people, not to politicians'



"BUT the appointments are not over yet. There are still many vacant positions," President Macapagal assures the "disgruntled" during her first press conference in Malacañang on Thursday.

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO
AND AMY BAINBRIDGE

LESS than a week into the Macapagal administration, a multisectoral group that includes the Makati Business Club has expressed grave concern over the Cabinet appointments made so far and the alleged lack of transparency in the selection process.

The group, Pagbabago@Pilipinas, composed of artists, businessmen, politicians and members of civil society, yesterday urged President Macapagal-Arroyo not to be beholden to political debts and to adhere to the selection process to which she had earlier committed.

"We see politics rearing its ugly head, and we see names of politicians that were not even on the short list of the search committee she had appointed," said Lori Tan, a conservationist and owner of Bookmark.

Guillermo Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club, aired the same concern.

Luz recalled that Ms Macapagal had promised to appoint "young, brilliant and capable" people to government positions.

"Her debts are to the people, and political concession is really not necessary," he said.

He pointed out that even before Ms Macapagal took her oath of office on Saturday, a five-member search committee had come up with a short list of qualified candidates.

"We believe that the choices have mostly been political concessions, and not based on the prospects' capability to handle their posts," Luz said.

Luz said it was a surprise to learn of the appointment of officials that were not even on the short list.

The search committee is com-
CABINET/ A16

Gloria: 'Hello, Spine'; hello, Copa'

BY DONNA S. CUETO
AND CAROLYN ARGUILLAS
Chief, PDI Mindanao Bureau

"HELLO, Spine? Are you going to stage a coup against me?"

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo asked Lt. Gen. Edgardo "Spine" Espinosa over the phone

in the middle of a press conference in Malacañang yesterday afternoon.

The call validated the President's statement that a military coup at this time cannot happen, as she was "in touch" with the military leadership.

She said that Espinosa was an "old friend."

Espinosa, the Southcom chief who was unceremoniously relieved from his post early last year by then President Estrada, is said to have told Ms Macapagal that a coup plot was "beyond imagination."

Ms Macapagal had earlier asked if somebody could call Espinosa after a reporter said he was alleg-

edly plotting a coup d'etat because their withdrawal of support from Estrada to support People Power II, had not been given due credit.

Espinosa told the INQUIRER that he immediately dialed the cell phone number of Ms Macapagal when he saw her on TV addressing
GLORIA/ A6

Mercado quits over Abadia

BY CARLITO PABLO,
STELLA O. GONZALES
AND CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

AS newly named officials climb on board the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado is getting off, and two others have declined the invitation altogether.

Mercado tendered his resignation yesterday—the first to quit Ms Macapagal's Cabinet—saying it would be "uncomfortable" working with National Security Adviser

Lisandro Abadia.

He quit barely a week after joining the military in withdrawing support from then President Joseph Estrada, and two days after seeing his disgraced former boss at the latter's residence on Polk Street in San Juan.

In Malacañang, Ms Macapagal said that Mercado's leaving did not have any security implication, and that it was pre-arranged.

"I have not yet decided whether to accept his resignation," she said, as reported by Agency

France Presse.

Ms Macapagal said that when she took over, "I asked him to stay on" until a replacement could be found.

Mercado had earlier planned to stay only until Feb. 12, when he files his certificate of candidacy as senator in the May elections.

Retired Lt. Gen. Leo S. Alvarez said he would not accept his appointment as the President's adviser on military affairs.

Alvarez said he had heard that he
MERCADO/ A16



MERCADO: "Uncomfortable"



ABADIA: Highly Irregular

Reyes, Espinosa hug, make up; 'Credit goes to Filipino people'

BY CARLITO PABLO
AND STELLA O. GONZALES

WHO GOT to Edsa first no longer mattered, or so it seemed as Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes and Marine Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa smiled and hugged each other before the cameras late yesterday afternoon.

They claimed their word war had been "laid to rest."

Only last Wednesday, the two

generals tried to devalue each other's role in the People Power II at Edsa.

Reyes said: "There is enough credit for everybody to share. It's finished."

Espinosa followed up: "The credit goes to the Filipino people."

Espinosa had claimed that Reyes acted at the last minute and only because he had lost control over the AFP which he said was already poised to withdraw its support from Estrada.

Espinosa was supposed to lead AFP units to join the people on Edsa on Jan. 20, a scenario which was earlier validated by the account of former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat.

But the man whom Abat had earlier credited for convincing Reyes to withdraw support from Estrada, retired Lt. Gen. Leo S. Alvarez, brushed off the claims of Espinosa.

Alvarez, former commander of the Presidential Security Group, said
REYES/ A6



Pro-Erap groups march in Davao

BY JOWEL F. CANUDAY
AND ALLAN A. NAWAL
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Leaders of pro-Estrada groups are launching their own version of "people power" to bring the deposed President back to Malacañang.

Some 1,000 student
PRO-ERAP/ A16



REYES: Enough credit to go around.



ESPINOSA: Word war over.

Second FRONT PAGE



PING'S SPY FUNDS INTACT

Attempt to withdraw P100 M foiled

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

TO THE victors go the spoils but in the aftermath of the downfall of the Estrada administration, the vanquished have tried to get what they could.

Presidential chief of staff Renato Corona revealed yesterday that the new Macapagal government was able to block on Monday the withdrawal of more than P100 million in government funds from secret bank accounts in the Land Bank of

the Philippines and other banks, by officials of the deposed Estrada administration.

One of the funds reportedly belonged to the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) which had been created and headed by resigned Philippine National Police Director General Panfilo Lacson, a staunch Estrada ally.

Corona did not identify the persons who attempted to withdraw the money except to say they were "people" of the ousted Estrada.

They were reportedly turned away

by personnel of the banks concerned who had been warned of attempts to take out the government funds.

"The funds have not left government coffers," Corona said. "(The funds) will go back to the National Treasury."

Corona told reporters that highly placed sources tipped him off Sunday that withdrawals would be made, prompting him to warn the banks on the first business hour on Monday against honoring any withdrawals.

The banks were told there was a new administration and there will

be "new sets of signatories" for the bank accounts.

Even before Sunday's tip, the Macapagal camp said it had heard of the accounts and was trying to determine where the government money, mostly intelligence funds, were deposited, Corona said.

"The letters (warning the banks) were ready because it was just a matter of writing in the date since we didn't know when Estrada was stepping down," Corona said.

He surmised that persons loyal to Estrada had "control of the checks" for the bank accounts and took these with them when they left Malacañang Saturday.

"Estrada left office Saturday so we knew that we had to move quickly on Monday," Corona said.

Corona said personnel from the banks concerned confirmed their suspicions when the banks reported on Monday afternoon that "certain persons had come and tried to encash checks that were payable to cash."

These people were unsuccessful, Corona added.

Aside from funds for the intelligence operations of police and military units, as well as civilian agencies, Corona said the government bank accounts also consisted of "funds from dubious sources." He did not elaborate, however.

"Some (former officials) had government funds, cash advances in their own names, essentially intelligence funds that they tried to put into sub-accounts to prevent tracing," Corona said.

He said these people probably wanted to pocket the money.

Asked who tried to withdraw the funds, Corona asked rhetorically, "Who else?"

Likewise, he refused to say who tipped him off about the attempted withdrawals, saying their lives would be in danger if he did so.

"These are secret accounts that only a few people knew about," Corona said.

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Gloria goes easy on death penalty

BY A. BAINBRIDGE

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday that a legislation repealing capital punishment—a hot topic during the administration of former President Joseph Estrada—would not be top priority on her legislative agenda.

At a press conference in Malacañang where she introduced 15 new Cabinet members to the media, Ms. Macapagal said that though she had "personally voted against" capital punishment and there were many people

who wanted the legislation, the budget was the top priority for Congress.

"We have to put together a legislative agenda," the President said.

"There are many laws that have to be recommended to Congress."

The President said an agenda that was related to "fighting poverty, bringing our country into the economy, social programs, improvements in stand-

ards and social equity" would be brought to Congress.

"Right now, for this particular Congress, the only legislation they are pushing is the budget."

The Macapagal administration is facing a budget deficit of around P200 billion. Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo is considering a revenue-raising scheme to solve the problem.

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NBI hands were tied in probes -Wycoco

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC

NEW NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco admitted yesterday "certain personalities in the previous administration" hindered the agency's investigations into the abduction of Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and the ownership of the mansions allegedly belonging to deposed president Joseph Estrada.

Wycoco said he has ordered a full investigation of the two cases, vowing, "I will leave no stone unturned."

Wycoco, however, refused to go into detail or identify the top officials of the Estrada administration who blocked the NBI probes of the Dacer and mansions cases.

"At this point, let's just say that the NBI did not receive proper coordination from concerned authorities. Now we have better (working) conditions," he said.

Dacer, a well-known but controversial public relations practitioner, was abducted two months ago. Authorities are no closer to solving his kidnapping despite two months of intensive investigation by the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Wycoco also ordered the NBI to step into the probe of the Dec. 30 bombings in Metro Manila that claimed 22 lives and injured 100 persons and remains unsolved.

"We will do our best to identify the real culprits in the bombings," said Wycoco, who ordered NBI agents to coordinate with PNP and AFP investigators.

Wycoco's revelation was confirmed by NBI Deputy Director Carlos Caabay to reporters at yesterday's turnover ceremony at the NBI.

Wycoco took over from Caabay who was acting NBI director after the late Director Federico Opinon went on leave due to illness.

Caabay admitted the agency's hands were tied during the Estrada administration.

"There was hindrance; there were people, it was hard to go against," he said. "(But) we will have better opportunities this time."

It was during Caabay's temporary watch at the NBI that the agency cleared Estrada of any connection to the so-called Erap mansions.

But Caabay maintained it was not he but his predecessor, Opinon, who had ordered the investigation of the mansions.

"I merely inherited the case," he said.

Contrary to speculation that Wycoco's assumption to the NBI top post would be met by protest because he was an outsider, the three-star general peacefully assumed the post yesterday. All of the NBI's top brass were present to receive him.

Wycoco is the 15th director of the NBI.

Gonzalo Santos, 65

GONZALO T. Santos Jr., former chief executive trustee of the Asset Privatization Trust and former commissioner of the Securities and Exchange Commission, died Wednesday at the age of 65.

He suffered a stroke in December 1998 from which he never recovered. He was conscious and showed happiness as he watched on television the downfall of Joseph Estrada and the oath-taking of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as 14th President of the Philippines.

Santos is survived by his wife Virginia; children Ma. Victoria Cristina and Francis Abraham; Gonzalo III and Edlyn B. Jimenez and Fredrick Maxi-milian; grandchildren Daniella, Miguel and Francesca, Regina and Benjamin; brother Noli Santos, 1971 Constitutional Convention delegate and 1986-87 Nueva Ecija governor; and sister-in-law Carmelita

Soriente-Santos; and sister Pearl Santos-Cacho, bank officer II of the BSP office in Cabanatuan City.

A graduate of the UP College of Law and Yale University, Santos had a colorful career as educator, law practitioner, bank executive, author of law books and writer in law journals here and abroad.

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Equitable: Go family not selling anymore

By CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE GO family which controls Equitable PCI Bank has changed its mind about selling its 31 percent stake in the third largest lender in the country.

This leaves two state pension funds to peddle their combined 37 percent interest in the bank which had been hit by massive withdrawals recently after its involvement in ex-president Joseph Estrada's corruption cases was revealed.

Executive Director Horacio Templo of the Social Security System said he has received information the Gos are no longer interested in selling their shares.

"As far as I know, the Go family is not selling anymore," said Templo who sits on the board of publicly listed Equitable PCI.

The SSS owns 25 percent of the bank while the Government Service Insurance System has 12 percent.

A source said the Go family believed the ouster of Estrada has lifted the stigma on the bank which suffered withdrawals of more than P40 billion as of the end of

October.

Bank officials did respond to efforts to get their side.

Industry sources said the Bank of the Philippine Islands was emerging as the "most financially capable" buyer into Equitable PCI.

Aside from BPI, other banks that submitted bids for Equitable PCI were the Metrobank Group together with the Tokai Bank of Japan, Spain's largest Banco Santander Central Hispano and the foreign venture firm Newbridge Capital Inc.

Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura acknowledged that BPI has the resources and the capability to buy into Equitable PCI.

"BPI could be one of the more interested but I don't think Equitable has made a decision. I don't think they have reached that stage," said the BSP chief.

The central bank governor also said that as far as he knew, the bank or part of it remains for sale.

Equitable PCI chair Ricardo Romulo said last Monday the bank is re-thinking its plan to sell, particularly if deposits improve this week.

Industry estimates that the bank lost between P30 and P40 billion of its P160 billion in deposits after it was linked to the impeachment trial of Estrada, although one banker claimed the withdrawals reached P80 billion.

"It is not just the huge withdrawals that they have to contend with but the perception that they simply volunteer confidential information without being asked," the source said.

Equitable PCI, to distance itself from the embattled Estrada, voluntarily submitted documentary evidence which linked the ousted president to fictitious multimillion-peso accounts in the bank. There were concerns that this was done without the evidence being subpoenaed.

"They violated banking confidentiality and now clients won't trust them," another bank industry source said.

The Go family owns about 30 percent of Equitable PCI, with former chair George Go holding one percent. The Romualdez family owns seven percent and the rest of the shares are spread between Equitable Investments Inc. and the investing public.

MILF backs Pimentel as VP

THE SECESSIONIST Moro Islamic Liberation Front, for whatever it was worth, yesterday cast its lot with Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. in the battle for the post of vice president of the Republic.

"If I were to choose from among the nominees for the vice presidency, I would rather pick 'Nene' (Pimentel's nickname) because he is from Mindanao," said MILF chair Salamat Hashim, in a press statement sent to the INQUIRER.

"I consider him a highly principled man, which he recently manifested when he announced his resignation as Senate president during the impeachment trial," Hashim added.

Hashim's cousin, Bai Monera Pendatun, confirmed the MILF endorsement, saying even Moro National Liberation Front chair

and ARMM Gov. Nur Misuari considered Pimentel the "most qualified and most accepted by Mindanao leaders."

"Pimentel as vice president will surely speed up the healing process that President Macapagal-Arroyo seeks to achieve in her administration," Pendatun, the MNLF's Unified Command adviser, said.

Tycoon Enrique Zobel, in a letter to the INQUIRER, also offered a vote of confidence, "from one among the business sector," for Pimentel.

He said that Pimentel had the greatest chance of "bringing about real peace and justice" in Mindanao, "respected as he is even by armed groups on all sides of the Mindanao issues."

Sen. Franklin Drilon, one of the candi-

dates for the post, said yesterday he was saddened by an INQUIRER report that some sectors were "uneasy" over his being considered a candidate for Vice President because of his association with Estrada's executive secretary, Edgardo Angara.

"Let no one doubt my unflinching loyalty to good governance and the national interest. I will never allow my personal friendship to dictate my conscience," he said in a statement.

Drilon noted that he and Angara were fraternity brothers and colleagues in Accra Law and in the Senate. But, he said, "We may have shared a common past but on matters of national interest, Ed and I take independent positions." *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Juliet Javellana*

'GIVE HIM A CHANCE'

Anti-crime crusaders lock horns over new PNP chief

By TJ BURGONIO AND JEROME ANING

ANTI-CRIME groups have locked horns over whether to support or fight the appointment of Deputy Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza as the new head of the Philippine National Police.

Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption president Dante Jimenez, who went to Camp Crame to express his organization's support to Mendoza, called on other groups yesterday, "Let us give him a chance to prove his worth."

Jimenez elaborated, "There is an ongoing reorganization of the PNP, so I think the new leadership should first be given a chance to do what it can in fighting crime and keeping peace and order."

But while calling for unity, Jimenez said he thought agents of former PNP chief Panfilo Lacson were behind the intrigues sown against Mendoza with the ultimate purpose of discrediting him and destabilizing the administration of Ms. Macapagal.

Across the divide, Carina Agara, chair of the Crusade Against Violence, challenged Mendoza yesterday: "Quit if you can't produce the gunman of my husband alive."

Agara said she suspected Mendoza had a hand in the recent escape of the confessed triggerman in

the 1996 slay of her husband, lawyer Clarence Agara.

She noted that Mendoza was a very close friend of the alleged mastermind in Agara's murder, Hector Samonte.

Agara also disclosed that the CAV had received information that a high-ranking PNP official had called guards at the Laguna police provincial command "to let go" of confessed gunman Luisito San Juan on Jan. 21.

What was interesting, she added, was that San Juan's escape happened one and a half hours after she turned down Mendoza's request that she forego her plan to meet with President Macapagal and express her reservations to his appointment as PNP chief.

"I waited for five years for the resolution of my husband's case. If they can do that (spring the suspect from jail) to me as president of CAV, what more to the little Juan de la Cruz?" Agara asked in a press briefing in Quezon City.

Mendoza, in an interview over private radio station dzMM, brushed aside Agara's allegations and dared her to file charges in court. He also threatened to sue Agara and Teresita Ang-See of the Citizens Action Against Crime for linking him to kidnapping.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, January 26, 2001

Sts. Timothy and Titus

1st Reading: 2 Tim 1:1-8 or Tit 1:1-5
Gospel: Lk 10:1-9

The Lord appointed seventy-two other disciples and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place, where he himself was to go. And he said to them, "The harvest is rich, but the workers are few. So you must ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers to his harvest. Courage! I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Set off without purse or bag or sandals; and do not stop at the homes of those you know."

Whatever house you enter, first bless them saying: 'Peace to this house.' If a friend of peace lives there, the peace shall rest upon that person. But if not, the blessing will return to you. Stay in that house eating and drinking at their table, for the worker deserves to be paid. Do not move from house to house.

When they welcome you in any town, eat what they offer you. Heal the sick who are there and say to them: 'The kingdom of God has drawn near to you.'

Commentary:

They were to bring "no food, no sack, no money, no second tunic..." if they were to take their discipleship seriously as an art of feeling totally secure in the Father's hands. Jesus had to begin by assuring them they had no reason to feel insecure. In our day and age when security is defined by insurances and life plans, by permanent and liquid assets, the Gospel presents a counter-value for the apostle: namely, to be comfortable even in poverty and utter vulnerability, and to learn to rely also on the generosity and goodness of others. Only in this way can he enter more deeply into their lives. On the other hand, he had to learn to deal with rejection too. There was no reason to be bogged down when faced with hostility. All he had to do was to shake the dust off his feet and move on.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., U.P. Village, Diliman, Quezon City, U.P. P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cnl.net; Website: http://www.cnl.net/claret

'Anybody but Ani'

By BLANCHE S. RIVERA

ANYBODY but Ani.

This was the cry yesterday of a group of lawyers who asked President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to sack Ombudsman Aniano Desierto.

The Free Legal Assistance Group (Flag), which helped the prosecutors in the impeachment trial of Estrada at the Senate, sought Desierto's replacement by a new and "more credible" Ombudsman who would investigate the plunder and bribery charges filed against Estrada and his family.

Flag said that Desierto was "not fit to do the job, judging by his track record in previous cases involving persons closely identified with Estrada."

Flag chair Jose Manuel Diokno also urged the Macapagal administration to pursue other charges against Estrada and his family in the regular courts, "to provide a counterbalance in case the Office of the Ombudsman bungles the cases it is supposed to prosecute."

"We have had so many terrible experiences with Desierto, starting with the Kuratong Baleleng case, that we have totally lost faith in him," Diokno said in a press conference at Club Filipino yesterday.

He recalled how Desierto failed to prosecute top police officials led by former Philippine National Police Director General Panfilo Lacson, a close ally of Estrada, in the alleged summary execution of members of the notorious Kuratong Baleleng robbery gang a few years back.

Flag said the Ombudsman's handling of the Kuratong Baleleng case could be indicative of Desierto's bias toward Estrada, former first lady Luisa Ejercito and their son, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, who are facing economic plunder and bribery charges before the Office of the Ombudsman.

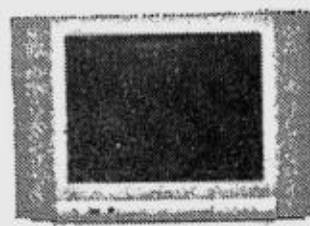
In the Kuratong Baleleng case, the charges were dropped against Lacson and his co-accused after witnesses retracted their affidavits under suspicious and mysterious circumstances.

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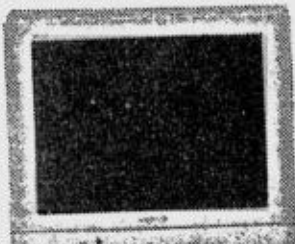
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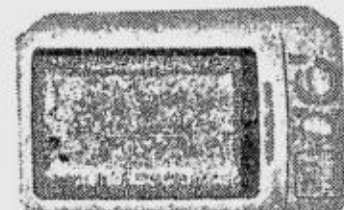
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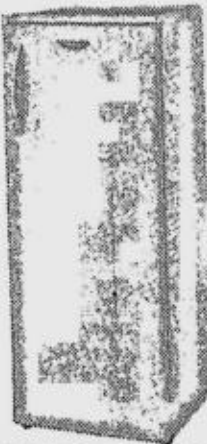
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Finally, Cerilles quits DENR 'to avoid embarrassment'

BY CYNTHIA D. BALANA

ENVIRONMENT and Natural Resources Secretary Antonio Cerilles Wednesday thanked President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for allowing him to serve her administration "for three days," as he tendered his irrevocable resignation to "avoid embarrassing" the new administration.

In his resignation letter, Cerilles told the President, "It's been a rare privilege serving you for three days. I wish you the best of luck... and I and my family will continue praying for your administration's success."

Cerilles told Ms Macapagal that contrary to reports that he wanted to hold on to his post, he had actually been waiting for his successor since



CERILLES

Monday, two days after the new President was sworn into office after a popular revolt drove Joseph

Estrada from power.

Cerilles was captured by news cameras among the last officials of the Estrada administration to leave the deposed president's side in Malacañang.

His tenure at the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources

was marked by controversy springing from his pro-logging background.

Cerilles said he was irked by allegations of some DENR employees that he wanted to cling to his office or that he had switched his allegiance to Ms Macapagal.

He accused former DENR officials whom he fired during his watch for their involvement in administrative and criminal cases of being behind the allegations.

"Since Jan. 19, I had taken out all my personal belongings and have been simply waiting (to) peacefully and formally turn over the DENR to my successor," he said.

Cerilles designated Undersecretary Marlo Rono officer in charge while the department awaits the appointment of a new secretary.

On Monday, Cerilles called on some 25,000 DENR employees to fully support the next secretary. He also urged them to support the new President.

MESSAGE TO "GMA"

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No revamp at immigration

NEWLY installed Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo yesterday ruled out an immediate reshuffle of personnel at the Bureau of Immigration at this time, saying the delivery of services shall be the top priority.

Domingo made the assurance after assuming the post of immigration commissioner Rufus Rodriguez in brief turnover ceremonies at the BI office yesterday.

Domingo's first directive was for the all division and section chiefs as well as heads of different sub-ports and field offices to submit a detailed summary of their work targets which would be used to evaluate their performance.

"I am giving them sufficient time to prove that they deserve to remain in their present jobs before I decide on whether they should be transferred or reassigned," Domingo said.

Domingo said she would also continue the renovation of the bureau's main building in Intramuros and complete the bureau's computerization project which were initiated by Rodriguez.

Domingo was immigration commissioner from 1989 to 1992 under the Aquino administration. She was then elected congresswoman in the third district of Pampanga before working as chief of staff of former House Speaker Jose de Venecia. *Gerald G. Lacuarta*

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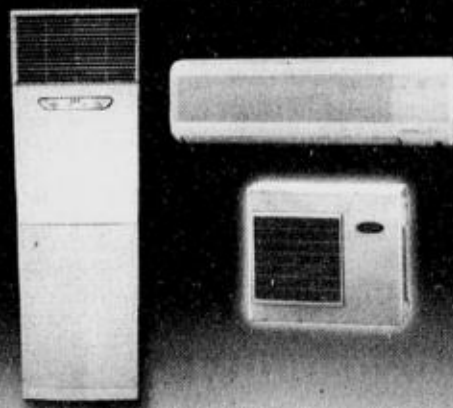


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Reyes, Espinosa hug, make up; 'Credit goes to Filipino people'

(From page A1)

yesterday that Reyes had the complete support of the AFP, contrary to claims by some military officers that the AFP chief only left Estrada after he had lost the support of his men.

"Reyes enjoyed the support of the big majority of the AFP at that time and had they (Espinosa group) decided to attack Camp Aguinaldo *ay baka napulbos sila* (They could have been crushed). The troops were well-placed and determined to defend and support him (Reyes)," Alvez said.

Whose inside story behind the AFP defection is true? Reyes or Espinosa?

Both, according to a retired general. He confirmed both Abat's version as well as that of Espinosa.

The retired officer, who asked not to be named, said Espinosa even briefed former Defense Secretary Renato de Villa on the plan.

As outlined by Espinosa and Abat, military units were scheduled to come out on Jan. 20 when the crowd gathered at the Edsa Shrine was expected to be massive.

"Jan. 20 was D-Day. The troops were prepositioned as early as Thursday. Espinosa had the Southern Luzon Command, Northern Luzon Command, Marines and tanks," the source said.

Friday group

In a previous phone interview, Abat said Espinosa had tapped the Marines as well as the Northern and Southern Luzon commands of the AFP while Abat's son-in-law Senior Supt. Jaime Carling coordinated with officers of the Philippine National Police.

The source said Reyes and his staff were caught unawares of the mobilization made with the military and had no choice except to defect.

"They (Reyes and company) are now being called the Friday Group. They didn't know what happened," the source said.

Discredit

Upon Reyes' instructions, his personal staff at Camp Aguinaldo held a hastily called media briefing last Wednesday to discredit Espinosa's version of the events.

Brig. Gen. Alfonso Dagudag, deputy chief of staff for operations, said that Espinosa had no units under him, being only the Commandant of the AFP Joint Command and Staff College.

Dagudag said: "As far as we are concerned, he has no units. Where are those units?"

Dagudag said that Camp Aguinaldo

got a report that Espinosa even went to the Marine Headquarters in Fort Bonifacio on Jan. 19 in civilian clothes. He allegedly tried but failed to recruit Marines.

Maj. Roy Devesa, an aide of Reyes, said in the same briefing that "all along we knew his (Espinosa's) activities."

Devesa said there were reports that Espinosa talked to two battalion commanders of the Marines six times each and was politely turned down.

Devesa said that on Espinosa's seventh call to them, he was brusquely told that they would obey only orders coming from Reyes.

"*Binasos pa nga siya, eh*," Devesa said.

Dagudag stressed several times that Reyes had full control over AFP units and that military commanders were in touch with him before he and Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado went over the line.

Mind made up

Alvez said Reyes had probably even already made up his mind to support the people massed at Edsa even before they talked on the night of Jan. 17. That night, Alvez was convincing Reyes, his classmate at the Philippine Military Academy, Class of 1966, to consider withdrawing from the Estrada administration.

"I think he already made up his mind, we just gave him the facility, mechanics and timing," Alvez said.

He admitted that there were some military men involved in a movement, separate from that of Reyes and the AFP hierarchy.

"We were informed that there were other groups but I told (Reyes) that I think there is no firm decision yet from this group," Alvez said.

From feedback he received from some military men, Alvez said, he learned that "their D-Day was not fixed up yet."

He recounted that he received a phone call on Jan. 17, Thursday, from a military officer assigned in Northern Luzon asking him "if the movement was going to be on Thursday or Friday."

He told the caller "there are no such plans."

When he talked to Reyes that night, Alvez said he told Reyes that he should keep three things in mind when he made his decision: prevent bloodshed on Edsa, prevent the fragmentation of the AFP, and consider the interest of the country and the people.

They talked for three minutes only and then Alvez told Reyes to sleep over



PEOPLE Power 3? Council on Philippine Affairs (Copa) members pose for souvenir photo at the Peping Cojuangco residence. Front row, (seated): Tingting Cojuangco, King Sumulong, Choy Alas, Aris Ilagan. Second row, (seated): Larry Henares, Teddy Casino, Lisa Masa, Billie Esposo, Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa, Chavit Singson, Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, Popoy Lagman, Trilix Singson, Wilson Fortaleza, May Anne Esposo. Third row, (standing): Col. Ernie Amboy, Antonio Oppen, Colonel Yacat, Gen. Rolando Escalona, Joey Solis, Ching Montinola, Amado Bagatsing, Pastor 'Boy' Saycon, Johnny Aquilas, Angel Okol Jr., Argee Guevarra, Maria Montellibano, Garry Vasquez, Boy Montellibano.

it and that they should meet again Friday morning.

Body language

Reyes did not say anything, but Alvez said that from the AFP chief's "body language," he could discern that the latter was only thinking about the "mechanics and timing" of his withdrawal of support.

While Reyes mulled over his moves that night, Alvez met with then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Alvez told Ms Macapagal that he believed Reyes was "going to side with the people."

Ms Macapagal was surprised, and then asked questions about the welfare of the people on Edsa at that time.

"How about the people? Will there be bloodshed? *Kawawa namang yung mga tao sa labas* (Pity the people out there). How about the Constitution?" were among the questions raised by Ms Macapagal.

And then she declared: "I will not join any move that's not constitutional in nature."

The next day, Friday, Alvez met Reyes over breakfast in the AFP chief's house. Reyes' wife, who was still in pajamas, apparently had no inkling of the brewing plot.

At 11:30 a.m. Estrada called Reyes to Malacañang. But Alvez was concerned about what could possibly hap-

pen.

"I told him you cannot go there, if you do, that might be the end of you," Alvez said he told Reyes.

"The plan must have leaked out and General Reyes could be placed under arrest, so I asked him not to go," Alvez said.

Reyes then met with Ms Macapagal at a house in Corinthian Garden in Quezon City where they held a one-on-one meeting. Among the issues raised by Reyes with Macapagal were good governance, graft and corruption, upholding the Constitution and "no vindictiveness."

The "no vindictiveness" point, according to Pangasinan Rep. Hernani Braganza, who was also privy to the negotiations, did not really pertain to Estrada or anyone or anything in particular.

At 1 p.m., the service commanders of the AFP arrived and met with Reyes and Ms Macapagal. Just as the group was about to leave for Edsa, then Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado arrived and they had to go back to the house to hold another meeting.

After everything had been settled, the group proceeded to Edsa at 4 p.m.

Alvez and Braganza admitted meeting with former President Fidel Ramos on the night of Jan. 16, Wednesday, in the latter's house in Ayala Alabang. The meeting supposedly lasted for only five

minutes and, according to Alvez, they only discussed matters relating to the security of the prosecution witnesses in the impeachment trial.

Security for witnesses

Alvez headed the team hired by the prosecution team to provide security to the witnesses at the impeachment trial of Estrada. He retired from the military service in 1997.

Braganza, a nephew of Ramos, said the former president told him to make sure to get a rally permit for the Edsa crowd.

Alvez and Braganza stood by their story about their meeting with Ramos despite doubts raised by the select group of newsmen who met with them yesterday.

Integrity intact

"Let's keep the integrity of the Armed Forces, let's stop this bickering," Alvez asked Espinosa.

He echoed former President Fidel V. Ramos who also appealed to military officials who had been trading barbs on who should be given credit on the military's defection from the Estrada administration. The turning point of People Power II "should not be fought over interminably," Ramos told a briefing at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport before departing for the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, as President

Macapagal's personal envoy.

Ramos, also a former AFP chief of staff, said the bickering generals should instead focus their energy at ensuring stability and security in the country during the transition period of the Macapagal administration.

"Right now, during the transition period, that's the important task that we must undertake," he added.

Biazon

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon also said yesterday that military and police chiefs could be treading a dangerous path when they make political decisions and even join political groups.

"Politicians who might be plotting the downfall of the Arroyo government might find allies in disgruntled military leaders who feel they have been left out in the People Power II," Biazon said during the weekly media forum at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Manila.

Biazon was referring to the Reyes-Espinosa word war.

Biazon warned that there would be trouble if the political convictions of the military leader would not match that of the people and would come in the form of greed and hunger for power, which could lead to a coup d'etat.

"Disgruntled soldiers are potential recruits for people who want to destabilize the country," he said. *With reports from TJ Burgonio, Jerome Aning and Dave Veridiano*

Gloria: 'Hello, Spine'; hello, Copa'

(From page A1)

her Cabinet, "Can someone call General Espinosa?"

Espinosa said his answer to the President's question about staging a coup was: "It's beyond my imagination. How can I when I was the one who supported you? Why should I stage a coup when we're good friends. *Paminira lang 'yan*."

"Did Espinosa ever say (that)? Did he ever say explicitly that he would stage a coup? I will call him up right now and ask him," she said.

The President said that an expression of discontent was "not the same as a plan to stage a coup."

"But is discontent a coup immediately?" she asked.

A few minutes later, while Ms Macapagal was answering questions about information technology, Espinosa called up.

Professional

The President said that the military is a "professional and constitutional institution."

"It is an institution that values freedom and democracy," she said, downplaying rumors that there were personalities within the military, which had been instrumental in putting her in power.

The President said it was important to recognize the contributions of everyone who had helped her at Edsa.

"It is true that General Espinosa and his group had the valuable contribution. The official chain of command (also) had its valuable contribution," she said.

"And there is enough credit to go around for all, for everybody because we, all, everybody contributed. Nobody's contribution is to be diminished," she said.

Copa consulted

Ms Macapagal said the Council on Philippine Affairs, the group of former Tarlac Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, had been invited to be in touch with the search committee which recommends persons to fill up the Cabinet.

She said that they were invited even before the turnover.

"So it's not (true) that they were not consulted. They have not given me their inputs really," Ms Macapagal said.

She said she had already talked with Cojuangco about some of her ideas.

"But the appointments are not over yet. There are still many positions which are vacant. Certainly there is no intention to leave out Copa," she said.

The President admitted that there was such a broad group that had to be considered, but that the sectors belonging to this group were really "homogeneous in ideology and direction."

"We will try as much as possible to be one in thought," she said.

But in the end, if there are "too many different opinions, she stressed that she as the President of the country would decide and her opinion would have to prevail.

No dissension

Executive Secretary Renato de Villa said that there was no dissension among the ranks of those who had pushed Ms Macapagal into power.

"No, there is no dissension. They probably thought that we forgot (about) them," he said.

"This is a very broad front. Everybody in terms of representation was involved in that Edsa affair. And we're still in the process of thanking everyone and trying to find out how they want to help," De Villa said.

Accommodating those who had helped the new administration was not an easy task.

De Villa assured that the process of putting people into the new government had not yet finished.

"So if you are the one there, and you are down the line a little bit further, you might feel you are being neglected or being left out. Essentially there is no dissension," he said.

De Villa said that there was really no "active threat" to the new administration.

"We're very comfortable and we are feeling very, very secure about the situation," he said.

He said that when virtually all governments in the world had already expressed their support and sent their congratulations, and the "great majority" of the people are behind the President and even the Armed Forces are saying that President Macapagal-Arroyo was their commander in chief, then there is nothing to fear.

"What do we have to worry about?" De Villa asked.

He said they might just do a little more communication with the other groups.

Reyes' successor?

Espinosa, who succeeded Reyes as Southcom chief in mid-1999 (when the latter was promoted Army chief), is the second most senior military official and is believed to be among the contenders for the post of Chief of Staff when Reyes retires.

Another military general who asked not to be named said Espinosa's group, backed by retired generals, gave Reyes a "deadline," that if he did not withdraw support for Estrada, there were soldiers who would break away from the chain

of command.

Espinosa told the INQUIRER it was not he but the retired generals who gave Reyes the deadline.

Reyes, PMA Class '66, is set to retire on March 17. Espinosa, who said he is number two to Reyes in terms of seniority, belongs to PMA Class '67.

Espinosa was then Gen. Rodolfo Biazon's executive officer when the latter was commanding officer of the 3rd Marine Brigade in Davao City during the last years of the Marcos dictatorship.

Espinosa said he was not also demanding any favors from Ms Macapagal.

"*Kaibigan kami*, I am not asking. I am just waiting," he said.

Espinosa was relieved as Southcom chief early last year for still unexplained reasons.

Rumors were rife Zamboanga City, the Southcom base, that Espinosa was relieved after his wife Myrna had a fight with the wife of Lepeng Wee, then Presidential Consultant for Mindanao Economic Affairs. This report, however, could not be confirmed.

Friendly

Espinosa was described by journalists covering Southcom as "media-friendly."

Through his spokesperson, Maj. Salih Indanan, Espinosa made sure media had access to information, they said.

Espinosa also allowed the media to read the Southcom journal, unlike his successors, they said.

But Espinosa was also known by many as "*mahlilig sa nightlife*."

During his stint in Zamboanga City, he was usually spotted in several bars and local disco pubs. *With a report from Julie Alipala-Inot, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

On the other side of 'balimbing'

BY FE ZAMORA

IF the 1986 People Power Revolt bore the fruit *balimbing*, it looks like People Power II has yielded sour grapes.

What was billed as a reunion of men and women belonging to a group called the Council on Philippine Affairs (Copa) turned out to be an occasion for it to "correct" what it claimed was a distorted reporting of events.

"They don't want a repetition of Edsa '86 when their contribution was not recognized and correctly written about," said a media man who helped Copa organize the event held Wednesday night.

The reunion was held at the house of former Tarlac Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco in Dasmarinas Village, Makati City.

His sister, former President Corazon Aquino, who was swept to power by the 1986 revolt and who was a leading light in People Power II, was not present.

Sources close to Cojuangco said they were hoping that President Macapagal-Arroyo would appoint him agriculture secretary.

"*Mukhang nabalewala yata si Boss* (It looks like Boss was ignored)," the sources said.

A bone of contention was the gathering of a million people that,

Copa said, it had "produced" even before Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes and the other top generals announced their withdrawal of support from then President Joseph Estrada.

Copa founding member Maria V. Montellibano said it had already gathered one million people at that time. "We even put up another people power station," she told reporters.

Montellibano strongly denied suggestions that the crowd at Edsa swelled to a million only after the AFP's withdrawal of support.

Actually, a Copa-supported military withdrawal led by Marine Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa was supposed to have been set for the next day, Jan. 20.

The plot included a dramatic entrance, with Espinosa marching down Edsa with tanks and troops and declaring that they were withdrawing support from Estrada.

Espinosa was then to call on all military commanders to join them at Edsa.

To make sure that the reporters present at the reunion would get their facts straight, Copa distributed 19 pages of information on the group, whose slogan is "Be informed. Be concerned. Be involved."

In a talk with reporters, strategist Billy Esposo said Copa had worked hard to make People Power II a reality.

Erap free to leave RP, says DOJ

(From page A1)

betray the spirit and gains of the second People Power revolution."

A legislator urged that Estrada be placed under house arrest instead.

They were reacting to Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr.'s proposal to banish Estrada abroad to avoid possible bloodshed.

Pimentel said Estrada's continued presence in the country had emboldened his supporters to stage actions to reinstall the ousted President.

"If former President Estrada wants to leave, that is his decision. We cannot force him to leave," Perez said in a news conference in response to a query if the government would banish the former leader.

But Perez said Estrada "has not indicated" that he planned to go abroad. Perez quoted Estrada as saying: "I was born here, I live here and I will die here."

"Those are his words. We cannot send him in exile," Perez said.

Estrada was being tried for a host of corruption charges at the Senate after the

House of Representatives impeached him last year.

However, 11 senators voted last week to suppress evidence that would link Estrada to secret bank accounts.

Public outrage followed, culminating in a military-backed popular revolt that forced Estrada out of office on Jan. 20. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo replaced him.

Have him arrested

In the House of Representatives, some legislators opposed Pimentel's proposal.

"We must find a way to have him arrested," said Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales.

Rosales said placing Estrada under arrest would negate any move to make him a focal point for opposition.

For his part, Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo said Pimentel's proposal could have stemmed from the fact that the Senate did not know the evidence in the hands of the prosecution.

"How can we allow now the (former) President to go on exile if what he has done is terrible," Arroyo said,

Rep. Wigberto "Bobby" Tañada, a prosecutor in the impeachment trial of Estrada, is also against an exile for Estrada.

"Let the cases be prosecuted and tried and let justice take its course. If he will not be around, that may create problems legally, among others. It is not clear to me how he can be tried in absentia. Others say it's possible but I'm not sure," Tañada said.

Agusan del Norte Rep. Roan Libarios, also a prosecutor, favors an exile for Estrada provided that he goes to a country with an extradition treaty with the Philippines.

Sick proposal

Bayan Muna, a party-list group, assailed Pimentel's proposal to exile Mr. Estrada as "sick and groundless."

"We should not give Estrada an opportunity to evade charges and run like a fugitive criminal; he must face his day in court and be meted out the necessary punishment," Bayan Muna president Satur Ocampo said.

"The people are talking here of justice. We should give them what they deserve; justice and redemption is what

the second Edsa People Power wants to convey," he added.

The Pagkakaisa at Uganyan ng mga Magbubukid sa Laguna (Pumalag) said Ms Macapagal must have the political will to prosecute Estrada and his cronies for crimes against the people.

Otherwise, Ms Macapagal will betray the millions of people at Edsa who catapulted her to power, according to the group.

Teodoro Casifio, Bayan secretary general, said "Estrada's exile, if allowed, would be a major reversal for People Power II as it would repeat the sad mistake of letting the ousted leader go scot-free."

He was referring to the flight of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos after the Edsa revolt in 1986.

Casifio said there was no need to ship Estrada out of the country just to keep the stability of the Macapagal administration since "the people are in a more vigilant and militant position today than in 1986."

"Should Estrada and his minions shamelessly try to reassume power, we wish to remind them that the people will

not hesitate surrounding Polk Street just to ensure Estrada's arrest," Casifio said.

Crispin Beltran, chair of the Kilusang Mayo Uno, said only Estrada's arrest and the freezing of his assets could stabilize the country.

"This will revive a measure of faith in the justice system in the country, and be a concrete expression of President Macapagal's sincerity that she wants to lead a good government," Beltran said.

He said sending Estrada into exile was "not reflective of the people's demand that Estrada be put behind bars" on charges of plunder, malversation, bribery, graft and corruption and unlawful acquisition of wealth.

"To even suggest that Estrada be exiled is an insult to the millions of Filipinos who cried out at Edsa and in the various cities and provinces all over the country that he be immediately arrested and punished," Beltran said.

Like Beltran, Alvin Luque, Bayan-Davao City secretary general, said Estrada's "rightful place is inside a Philippine jail."

Crime against Moros

Luque said Estrada should be ar-

rested for plundering the country's treasury and for committing crimes against the Moro people when he waged an all-out war in Central Mindanao last year.

Letting Estrada go will also contradict President Macapagal's commitment to heal the division caused by the political upheavals in the country, according to Lydia Cansan, chair of Gabriela Mindanao.

"Healing can only start when justice is served the people. By justice, we mean that Estrada be prosecuted, arrested, convicted and jailed," Cansan said.

If Estrada's continued stay in the country posed a threat to the new administration, jailing would become all the more necessary, according to Robinson Montalba, chair of the Promotion of Church People's Rights in Southern Mindanao. *Reports from AFP, Jerome Aning, Gerald G. Lacuarta and Martin P. Marfil in Manila; Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; and Jewel F. Canaday, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NEW OPPOSITION

Senate 11, Erap allies regroup

BY JULIET JAVELLANA

ALLIES of ousted President Joseph Estrada, including the 11 "no" senators and some congressmen, have huddled together to form the opposition and signified an intention to support the move to challenge the legitimacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo's assumption to office.

The move was formalized at a luncheon meeting yesterday hosted by Edgardo Angara, Estrada's executive secretary, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Pasay City.

Present at the meeting were Senators Blas Ople, Francisco Tatad, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, John Osmeña, Juan Ponce Enrile and Teresa Aquino-Oreta; Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino and Jamby Madrigal, a presidential adviser during the Estrada administration.

Ople said Senators Vicente Sotto III, Ramon Revilla, Robert Jaworski, Anna Dominique Coseteng and Gregorio Honasan did not attend the meeting but sent "messages to indicate their support to these plans to strengthen the opposition."

Senate eleven

These were the 11 senator-judges, members of the then ruling Lapiang ng Masang Pilipino, who shot down the opening of an envelope believed to detail the bank account of Estrada under the name of Jose Velarde. Their "no" votes led to the collapse of the Estrada impeachment trial and the Edsa People Power 2 which catapulted President Macapagal into office.

Members of media, who waited at the Hyatt lobby, saw BW Resources Corp. majority-owner Dante Tan arrive at the hotel and take the elevator about 10 minutes before the senators came out of the meeting.

Ople and Tatad later denied Tan attended the meeting. Former finance secretary Edgardo Espiritu had

claimed at the trial that Estrada and Tan were partners in BW, whose spectacular rise and fall in value precipitated the near collapse of the stock market.

Santiago, the first to walk out of the hotel, confirmed the meeting was called by Angara to discuss the formation of an opposition group.

Spokesperson

Ople, who was assigned by the group to talk to the media, said: "The consensus is that in the Macapagal-Arroyo administration, we will lead a strong, constructive and responsible opposition. This is what the combined parties of the LDP and NPC (the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and the Nationalist People's Coalition parties) in the Senate and the House of Representatives and elsewhere will be able to provide."

Ople said members of the LDP, the NPC and other "independent" politicians would form an "alternative government" to the Macapagal administration. He noted that the LDP-NPC coalition, through Aquino, had taken the minority position in the House.

Ople said the opposition would field a complete and "strong" senatorial slate in the May 14 elections, probably with Santiago, Enrile, Honasan leading the ticket.

Ople and Santiago moreover said the opposition planned to support the move by some lawyers, led by former senator Rene Saguisag, to challenge the Macapagal presidency in court.

SC challenge

"I understand that several lawyers are planning to file a formal petition in the Supreme Court and the tendency of the opposition parties LDP and NPC is to support such a petition if one is filed," Ople said. Santiago said the opposition group was studying the matter.

Apostol is new majority leader

A MAJOR revamp was carried out yesterday at the House of Representatives in the wake of the assumption of Quezon City Rep. Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte as the new Speaker.

The changes reflected the Lakas assumption to power.

The new majority leader is Leyte Rep. Sergio Apostol while those named deputy speakers were Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla, Iloilo Rep. Raul Gonzales, Tawi-Tawi Rep. Nur Jaafar.

Romblon Rep. Eleandro Madrona, the former chair of the House committee on accounts under Speaker Manuel Villar, was reinstated to his old post.

The chairmanships of 47 committees are expected to be finalized on Monday although some have proposed that the matter should be left untouched except for the powerful appropriations committee that might be handed to Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad.

Several crucial measures, like the special budget for the 2001 elections, are expected to be tackled on Monday when session resumes.

The new leadership also named 13 assistant majority leaders—Mandaluyong Rep. Neptali Gonzales, Muntinlupa Rep. Ignacio Bunye, Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers, Iloilo Rep. Narciso Monfort, Taguig-Pateros Rep. Allan Peter Cayetano, Manila Rep. Nestor Ponce, Albay Rep. Krisel Lagman Luistro, Valenzuela Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo, Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras, Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, Quezon City Rep. Michael Defensor, Marinduque Rep. Edmund Reyes and Palawan Rep. Alfredo Abueg.



WATCH LIST

An immigration officer posts a picture of former President Joseph Estrada at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport where a hold departure order against the deposed president and members of his family had been issued.

cannot be found in the Himalayas but in the barren desert regions of Mars? This mountain, dubbed "Olympus Mons", is in fact the tallest mountain in the Solar System. Towering almost 60,000 feet high, this

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Unfinished business

SING no sad songs for the dissolution of the impeachment court. The only useful purpose it served was to give the Filipino people a glimpse of the greed, corruption and cronyism of former President Estrada and many people close to him. The unveiling of the whole sordid picture will have to wait until the Macapagal administration brings Estrada and his cohorts to court for plunder, graft and corruption and other crimes.

The truth—if not the whole truth—about Estrada's criminal transactions would have been revealed in the Senate 10 days ago had the 11 senators close to the former president not chosen to "imprison" it, as Sen. Rodolfo Biazon put it. But with evidence of Estrada's guilt mounting with the testimony of every witness called by the House prosecutors, the pro-Estrada senators thought it was time to stop the disclosure of more damning evidence. Little did they know that their highly partisan vote to suppress the truth would only transfer the venue of the trial from the Senate to the parliament of the streets. And that there in the streets, the Filipino people themselves would quickly pronounce Estrada guilty as charged and forthwith chase him out of Malacañang. In four days, People Power achieved what the Senate seemed loath to do after 24 days of long and laborious and at times suspenseful hearings: to render a fair verdict and give Estrada the punishment he deserved.

That shameful vote last Jan. 16 disgraced not only the 11 senators but the Senate itself.

It confirmed the doubts expressed by many critics of Estrada that impeachment could be made to work as a constitutional way of removing a top official found to have committed high crimes and serious violations of the Constitution and his oath of office. It exposed the Senate majority to be incapable of rising above partisan politics and narrow self-interest. In fact, the 11 senators showed themselves to be no better than the media hacks who argued that impeachment being a political process, the senators were bound to vote along party lines. Meaning Estrada had to be cleared because his party had the numbers, regardless of whether there was overwhelming evidence against him. Meaning further that impeachment trials are a farce and therefore any high official can commit any crime without fear of losing his post so long as his party has enough members in the Senate to ensure an acquittal.

Since the 11 pro-Estrada senators did a good job of wrecking the court, few are likely to lament its disbandment. The purpose for which it was constituted was achieved when Estrada was ousted from the presidency. So there was no point in continuing to hear the cases against him.

But who will now take care of some business that the impeachment court left unfinished? For instance, there was that motion to cite for contempt two of Estrada's lawyers for trying to pull a dirty trick on the senators' judges. Are they now free to do the same stunt in other courts of law? How about those who tried to mislead the Senate, like Jaime Dichaves who wrote the Senate to claim ownership of the Equitable PCI Bank accounts in the name of Jose Velarde, or Estrada's principal counsel Estelito Mendoza in whose office vital documents were tampered with? Will these attempts to obstruct justice just go unpunished?

A way has to be found to deal with such efforts to mislead the court and frustrate the administration of justice. To forget them would be to invite a similar mockery of the Senate and the impeachment process in the future. The Senate was badly damaged by the scandalous vote of 11 of its members. It should not allow others to get away with tricks and shenanigans that get in the way of the fulfillment of its responsibilities.

THE COALITION that was formed around then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is already falling apart over the spoils of the new administration. The Coalition on Philippine Affairs (Copa) is complaining, through former Rep. Peping Cojuangco, that it has been forgotten in the appointments to the new administration. The leftist organizations are complaining that there are too many *trapos* in the Macapagal administration.

The leftists are right. Too many *trapos* from the Aquino and Ramos administrations who were kicked out by the voters because they were less than trustworthy are coming back. But it is a good thing that President Macapagal has forgotten Copa, for it would be a big mistake to appoint the most *trapo* of them all: Peping Cojuangco. The people may go back to Edsa for a People Power 3 if she does.

Both Copa and the leftist organizations behave as if they were the ones who organized People Power 2 and put Ms Macapagal in Malacañang. They did not. Neither Copa nor the leftist NGOs called the people to Edsa as Jaime Cardinal Sin did in People Power 1 in 1986. This time, the people went to Edsa on their own. Minutes after the Senate voted 10-11 not to open that second envelope, angry people started gathering in places in Metro Manila, honking horns, banging pots and pans and chanting "Erap Resign!" Then they marched to the Edsa Shrine and People Power 2 was launched. Let not any organization claim credit for that spontaneous action of the citizens.

President Macapagal has a rare opportunity to reform not only government but Philippine society itself. She has the goodwill and support of the people, as much goodwill as President Corazon Aquino had after People Power 1. Cory spoiled it all by distributing the spoils to *trapos* and letting her greedy *kamagana*s try to surpass the Marcoses. Macapagal shouldn't spoil her own chance as Cory did by making the same mistake.

Everybody knows that she is under great pressure to appoint numerous job-seekers claiming to have helped her. They're relying. Remember that it was not the politicians who helped her get to Malacañang. It was the people at Edsa. Don't forget that. And they can take away what they

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

gave. Erap was elected with the biggest mandate in Philippine history, but the people took that mandate away from him when they learned how greedy and corrupt he was.

You know that job-seekers are not after service to the public but after loot because the most applicants are for those departments that have the most opportunity for making money such as the Bureau of Customs, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Department of Public Works and Highways, and the Department of Education, Culture and Sports. There were so many applicants for the Customs bureau that the President immediately appointed a career customs official, Deputy Commissioner for Operations Titus Villanueva, to the position, to avoid being pressured into appointing some *trapo*. Sen. Raul Roco is a good choice for DECS because he did not ask for it.

The spoils system is at its worst in the Philippines. President Macapagal has the opportunity to stop it. Now is the best chance as any to start a moral regeneration in our society. The people are watching and they will help her to reform society. Most of the people who went to Edsa were young people still full of idealism. They will help her rid the bureaucracy of corruption.

Ms President, don't throw away your chance.

Erap claims that the \$3 million and P100 million deposits in Citibank were his savings since 1985. Assuming that this is true, why did he not include them in his statement of assets and liabilities all these years? Clear proof that he violated the law.

Erap added that for 16 years, he has not touched the accounts so the interest earnings had accumulated. If he has not touched them for 16 years, then they are now dormant and not earning any interests. On the contrary,

monthly service fees for dormant accounts are being deducted from them.

Still on the subject of banks, aren't the senators interested in finding out the details of the Jose Velarde account which supposedly has P3 billion in deposits in the Equitable PCI Bank? The Senate has decided not to open the second envelope containing documents on Erap's accounts in Equitable. It just decided to pass it on, unopened, to the Ombudsman. They're not even curious to find out what the envelope contains? How about the people? Don't the people have the right to know the contents?

Or were the prosecutors merely bluffing when they said the envelope contains the smoking gun against Erap? Maybe its contents are harmless and they were afraid opening the envelope would reveal that they were bluffing. Not opening it only makes the people more curious.

Still on Equitable, Clarissa Ocampo, the bank's senior vice-president who testified against Erap (a.k.a. Jose Velarde), has come out with full-page newspaper advertisements pleading for the people to support the bank, as it cooperated fully with the impeachment court. It seems that the bank is suffering from heavy withdrawals because of calls by militant groups to boycott it. If they don't stop, the bank may collapse.

I have deposits frozen in two banks that declared bank holidays, one in Urban Bank (what happened to its overdue reopening, Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buena-ventura?), and in another bank said to be partly owned by a senator who closed many years ago (I got my money back). I am a long time depositor of PCI Bank (Heroes Hills branch), now Equitable PCI Bank, and my deposit may again be caught. But I will not withdraw it in order to help the bank. If everybody withdrew their deposits from a bank, that bank would definitely close. But if enough depositors are brave enough to trust and have faith in it, it would recover.

Besides, the collapse of another bank would be bad for the whole banking industry.

Making haste slowly

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

these individuals have any formal diplomatic status since they are not specifically accredited to sovereign countries or international organizations with diplomatic status, like the United Nations.

One clear example is the engagement of former President Ramos who is the President's special envoy to the World Economic Forum. This is an important role. One wonders, however, whether this particular status needed to be created for a former president for him to continue doing what he had already been doing quite well in the past. FVR already has a diplomatic passport as a former president and the WEF does not receive ambassadors since it is a private organization.

There is the similar situation with Ambassador Romulo, who is "envoy for international competitiveness." These have been justified as being of a temporary character and for this critical transition period only, after which the more normal processes will be reestablished. The DFA has expressed the hope that, though these envoys work outside the DFA structure and report directly to the President, the department will be provided with copies of their reports and kept on the information stream.

It is a little more difficult to understand the regional appointments such as those to "the Americas, the Islamic countries" and such, because they duplicate the existing structure. The result can only be confusion. Who is in charge? The local ambassadors? The DFA assistant secretaries for the region? The super ambassadors? Ambassadors to specific countries are appointed with these countries' consent and require confirmation by the Commission on Appointments. Even when they are recalled, they normally require a few weeks to wind up their affairs and tender their diplomatic farewell.

If political ambassadors need to be replaced

quickly, there are deputies in station who can serve as *charges d'affaires* until a new ambassador is appointed. One clear example was right here in Manila following the recall of Ambassador Thomas Hubbard. His deputy became the American *charge d'affaires* pending the appointment of Hubbard's successor.

Under these circumstances, one can understand the DFA's unhappiness at the two-tier structure of ambassadorships. It would probably have been more appropriate for these experienced men to have been appointed advisers to the President on these matters rather than be appointed envoys.

These difficulties may also indicate that the new administration still hasn't gotten its staffing pattern in place and that the President has not as yet been provided by her appointees with the necessary "CSW"—complete staff work—this early in her administration. In view of the brief and tumultuous transition, that is more than understandable.

Legally, there is also what might seem a minor point but something that her legal advisers might need to consider or correct. If the newspaper reports are accurate, a double appointment has been issued to Dominguez, first as presidential assistant and then as special envoy. Personally, my own view, is that this does not necessarily have to be a constitutional problem nor is it a reflection on Dominguez's abilities.

However, adequate staff work would have dug up the fact that this very issue was one of the articles raised by members of the House during the recent impeachment trial. The House leaders, then the opposition, adopted a strict interpretation of the rules against dual appointments. It would have helped if a consistent legal theory were adopted, both to protect the President and to avoid embarrassment to those whose only motivation may be to serve her and the country well.

These may be mere milk-teething problems of the new administration, which will soon disappear. This is no time to nit-pick. More important than what we call these appointees is what they can do for the country. But the new administration would do well to remember Augustus Caesar's favorite saw, *Festina lente*. Make haste slowly. Good advice from his successful administration.



GMA has rare opportunity to reform RP society

The steadying constant

WHATEVER legal issues have been raised over whether or not President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is an "acting" President, power has effectively flowed to her over the past five days, enhancing her control of government. The other day, the former minority party, Lakas-NUCD, took control of the House of Representatives with the election of the former minority leader, Rep. Feliciano Belmonte Jr., as Speaker.

Belmonte dislodged Rep. Arnulfo Fuentesbela who only last month deposed then Speaker Manuel Villar, after the Estrada administration took revenge on Villar for ramming the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate. The shake-up of leadership in Congress inevitably and swiftly follows the power shift in Malacañang.

In his futile bid to remain Speaker, Fuentesbela presented a curiously ambivalent argument that failed to stop the new majority from deposing him. He argued that although he believed that Ms Macapagal took power merely as an "acting" President, he attended her inauguration because he wanted to show that the House had joined other institutional representatives in backing the transfer of power at Edsa from deposed President Estrada to Ms Macapagal. Somehow, Fuentesbela's reasoning does not wash. His presence at the oath-taking served to legitimize the new administration's takeover, but at the same time he insists Ms Macapagal is an "acting" President whose office can be reclaimed by Estrada when he is no longer incapacitated. Fuentesbela must be dreaming, but the reality is that a new President, in the Philippine political tradition, enhances her legitimacy during the euphoria following the takeover.

Also last Monday evening, Ms Macapagal was guest at the birthday dinner at the Le Soufflé restaurant, in the Fort, hosted by the daughter of El Shaddai leader, Mike Velarde. Velarde was at that dinner. A month ago, Velarde spurned then Vice President Macapagal's request for him to demand the resignation of Estrada. Velarde turned down the request, and Ms Macapagal left the meeting with him with a sour face.

During the crisis that followed the Senate vote not to open bank documents in the second envelope,

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila



loped, Velarde dropped out of sight, leaving his adherents clueless at a time when Estrada needed to mobilize the numbers to counter the swelling multitudes at Edsa. In the last two days of Estrada's stay in power, Velarde claimed that he was giving Estrada spiritual advice. In reality, he could no longer mount a countermobilization because many of his adherents had gone to join the Erap resign movement. This was a case of a leader whose political preference was no longer shared by his followers and who had lost them. That was the case of the defection of the Armed Forces and the national police. AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes and the major services commanders, crossed over to Edsa last Friday after collecting the consensus from the colonels and majors who had decided to break away from Estrada. Reyes bowed to the pressure from below.

At the dinner with the new President, Brother Mike's presence was clearly an attempt to mend fences. For me, it was a mark of rank opportunism and a prelude to put El Shaddai behind Ms Macapagal. Rather than embrace Velarde, who rejected her when the crisis was in a stalemate, Ms Macapagal should look into how Velarde has been using the millions of pesos collected from the tens of thousands of El Shaddai followers, without receipts, for which Velarde has nothing to show in institutional infrastructure. Unlike other religious organizations that take themselves seriously, such as the Iglesia ni Cristo, Velarde has not built churches or rendered social services to serve his flock. He has used the El Shaddai as a political weapon, disguising his political involvement as "prayer meetings."

Velarde's attempt to build bridges with the new administration is one manifestation of the ex-

odus of turncoats and opportunists who want to be identified as pro-Macapagal and supporters of Edsa 2 after the crisis.

This bandwagon post-Edsa, or even post-election, is a feature of Philippine politics that broadens the mandate of a new President. If, for example, public opinion polls were taken a month after Ms Macapagal's inauguration, it will most likely show a high popularity rating. This broad mandate includes, of course, the opportunists who are now jumping on the Macapagal bandwagon.

There's a temptation that the new President could be pragmatic in accommodating Velarde as a new ally who can broaden her mass base, no matter how shifty it is. What is important for the new President to remember is that she should not lose sight of the fact that she occupies a high moral and strategic ground after taking power. Few presidents of this republic have been catapulted to the presidency without the heavy political baggage of electoral debts. She rode to the presidency on the back of people power. The people are not asking her to favor them with advantageous transactions the way Estrada's campaign contributors collected paybacks from him. What the people are asking is good governance and to give her primary loyalty to them—not to vested interest groups which are now jockeying for positions of influence in her new administration. The people are telling her to rise above particularistic interests and use the interest of the majority as the yardstick for decision-making and appointment of her Cabinet and key administration personnel.

She has no time to waste. With only less than three years to deliver results, she can't afford to make many mistakes. She will be judged quickly by the quality of her Cabinet appointments, as well as those in the higher bureaucracy, and in the quality of her decisions. The euphoria that is creating a bandwagon effect is the platform from which she can launch her initiatives. She can't lose this momentum. It is the results that will give her immunity from destabilization, including attempts to sow doubts on the legality of her accession.

'Utang ng loob'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



I remembered this when I got to talk with an officer of Kompil 2, the broad-based multi-sectoral coalition that organized the protests leading up to People Power 2, and in large part managed the events of those turbulent days. In an effort to ensure fair civil society representation in the new government, Kompil 2 had drawn up a list of its own nominees, only one or two of whom have so far been named. "Ang bilis gumalaw ng mga trapo (Those traditional politicians move really fast)!" he exclaimed. "Civil society processes are really too slow. We're getting left behind in our zeal for consultations."

Slowly but surely, the *trapos* and the political parties are hijacking the Macapagal presidency, he observed. Early on, President Gloria appointed a search committee, composed of credible figures from the business sector, academe and formerly with the government, who would carry out an initial search, gather the documents and present GMA with a short list for every position. But the search committee's efforts are being short-circuited by the *trapos*, who come right out with their demands and present appointment papers to the President, ready for signing.

For every 10 names presented by the search committee, I'm told, they're lucky if they get one or two appointed.

So what happened to the avowals of transparency, accountability and professionalism in government? *Utang ng loob*, Ms President, don't let *utang ng loob* be your government's downfall.

EMPLOYEES of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources have vowed to hold daily protests at the DENR headquarters until outgoing Environment Secretary Antonio

Cerilles leaves office.

Reports out of the DENR claim that in the last few days, Cerilles has been signing "midnight" environmental clearance certificates (ECC's), especially for controversial and questionable projects. Employees also talk of seeing documents being spirited out of the building or being shredded.

Asked to put a stop to such goings-on and take over from Cerilles, the senior undersecretary said he wanted to see a certification first from Malacañang before moving.

While Malacañang is taking its sweet time deciding who should take over the crucial post of environment secretary, it should act with dispatch to ensure that at the very least the environment is not despoiled beyond saving as a consequence of Cerilles' seemingly desperate last hours at the DENR.

CHARITO Planas, president of the QC Parks Development Foundation Inc., the NGO looking after the maintenance of the Quezon Memorial Circle, is crying harassment from City Hall, under the waning authority of Mayor Mel Mathay.

The latest incident involves a multipurpose building built by the DPWH on property within the Circle owned by the National Parks Development Commission. When the QCPDFI sought a permit to undertake repairs, City Hall employees demanded they present a transfer certificate of title. "But how can we present a title when the property is owned by government?" asks Charito.

The small building is meant to house offices for groups of senior citizens and the disabled, many of whom use the Circle for leisure and other group activities. At present, the building is uninhabitable, but repairs cannot be made without a permit from city hall. "The government has already spent money for this," says Charito, "yet it is also government that prevents us from putting it to good use."

The city government has been on a seeming vendetta against Charito and the QCPDFI, even fanning moves to rescind a memorandum of agreement that gave the foundation responsibility for managing the Circle. *Utang ng loob*, Mayor Mel, keep politics out of the Circle!

A 'real' book on Mabini and Luna

STUDENTS doing research on Filipino heroes other than Jose Rizal are left with a very limited range of biographies in English. If the subject is a heroine that narrows down the choices even further. Having published three books on Rizal I should register as a Nacida cottage industry, change topic and devote more time to other, preferably little-known heroes. Unfortunately, I have been mining Rizal's life and times for well over 15 years now and it is so lucrative to continue for another 15 years. Some editors at the defunct Daily Globe used to tease me about being Rizal's "PR." They said that for everything I have done for this man, Rizal should run for president. However, Rizal's bones lie quietly under the Luneta monument. He is not even disturbed during a crisis because the location of choice for protest rallies the past two decades has been the Liwasang Bonifacio. Now we have moved even further away from Edsa.

A prospective biographer who wants a real challenge can try outdoing Teodoro Agoncillo's landmark biography of Andres Bonifacio. Many have tried but could not cough up enough text for a lengthy definitive work, because material on Bonifacio is so sparse. I have chosen two heroes and have been studying them for the past five years in the hope of writing and publishing a "real book" instead of collections of my newspaper columns. Apolinario Mabini and Antonio Luna caught my attention primarily because there are a lot of materials written by them and about them. While no hero can beat the 25 volumes of writings left by Rizal, Mabini with two volumes is better than the handful of letters by Bonifacio whose authenticity has been questioned of late. Luna wrote articles for *La Solidaridad*, and there are illuminating letters to Rizal and other sources. Lastly, I was able to photocopy about half a balikbayan box of Luna's papers before they burned in a freak accident in the late 1980s.

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



Reading these materials leads me to believe that Mabini and Luna were the conscience of the unfinished Philippine Revolution and the short-lived First Philippine Republic. Their lives have much to teach our generation about political survival in a forest of *balimbings*. Some of the conflicts in the corridors of power sound so strangely familiar a century later. Mabini and Luna shaped Philippine history in a particular way, thus to understand them is to understand ourselves.

Years of patient research and reading gave me the silly idea that I was ready to embark on my book. Well, my visit to the US Library of Congress a few months ago proved me wrong. There was much I did not even know existed. We all know that Mabini served as Emilio Aguinaldo's closest adviser, but I did not realize how powerful this quiet disabled person was until I went through stray presidential papers in Washington, D.C. There were enough unpublished documents available to prove, at least to me, that no official and private papers reached Aguinaldo's desk without passing through Mabini. No document received the president's signature without clearing through Mabini's eagle-eyed guard. Most of the documents I handled had marginal notes in Mabini's small, almost feminine, scrawl. Mabini's scribbled notes gave his opinion on a course of action, recommended acceptance or rejection of requests, etc. Aguinaldo read all this before he returned a document to his staff to be copied out legibly, signed

and made official with the presidential seal. Mabini's letters written a century ago can very well have been written in the snake pit we know as Malacañang today. Looking at this paper trail made me imagine the American soldiers looting Aguinaldo's office and residence after the fall of Malolos in 1899. These papers taken as souvenirs or war booty a century ago are now preserved in the Library of Congress waiting for Filipino historians to use them. My problem was that Luna and Mabini were not the subject of my research grant, but at least I now know where these papers are and can hopefully return for further research when the peso-dollar rate has stabilized to a more comfortable level.

It was illuminating, for example, to find an undated letter of Luna to Mabini sending him complimentary copies of a newspaper which I presume was *La Independencia* of which Luna was publisher. When he resigned from his post, Mabini wrote some very sharp articles for *La Independencia*, one article was so critical of the Malolos Congress that Aguinaldo was pressured to impose censorship on the revolutionary paper. With this cover letter, Luna mentioned representation in *loocos* by his cousin Vicente Posadas, "one of the richest citizens of Zambales, a patriot and an *ilustrado* who conforms to my ideas." More fascinating than this brazen act of nepotism was that the hot-tempered Luna backed down in the next sentence explaining, "this is not a recommendation but a mere reminder." From a simple letter one can see how powerful Mabini was and how sensitive he was to unsolicited recommendations. Luna was removed by assassination, Mabini by intrigue. Perhaps if Mabini stayed on he would have been killed too, a closer reading of these papers will tell us more than we are willing to know.

Ambeth Ocampo's new e-mail address: ambeth@adm.u.ph

Big lesson of People Power 2

LET'S face it, People Power 2 and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's ascendancy to power was accomplished at some cost to constitutional democracy. In the end, it was the military which stepped in to resolve the crisis.

But we didn't have much of a choice. It was the lesser of two evils. At best, we would have had to endure months of political instability and an economic crash. At worst, we would have had street fighting, and either martial rule or an outright coup d'état. There's no use quibbling whether the new President is legitimate or not.

OUTLOOK

Rigoberto Tiglao



But People Power 2 tells us something important, which could even be one of its biggest lessons for us as a nation. Our institutions—which constitutional democracy is all about—aren't just working, and are most likely so flawed that we had to go to the streets.

For starters, take the minute mechanisms of those institutions.

Sen. Robert Barbers—who was absent during the entire impeachment trial—would have most probably voted to open the "second envelope." This would have meant an 11 to 11 stalemate in the Senate vote, and Presiding Officer Hilario Davide Jr. would have had to break the tie. Based on his earlier ruling on the first envelope, he would have voted to open the second one. Which means we wouldn't have been thrown into a constitutional crisis that triggered People Power 2, at least last week.

Not that the essential purpose of these human constructs we call "institutions" is that they minimize the impact of individual human frailties and whims, for the greater good of all. That's why for example, a lengthy part of the Constitution deals with a clear-cut succession mechanism in case a president is incapacitated.

Yet in the impeachment trial, and specifically in the "envelope" episode, we had one senator down with tonsillitis, and he didn't participate in the "trial of the century."

The Philippine Senate is probably the smallest legislative body among governments in the world to have such an awesome power as removing a head of state. The Constitution provided that it would have 24 seats. But at a crucial time when it was needed to resolve a political crisis, it had only 21 members. We didn't have a constitutional mechanism for filling up the two other seats vacated by the death of Marcelo Fernan and the running for the vice presidency of Macapagal.

But these are just the small bugs in our constitutional democracy's "software." One can easily spot many others. One is the absence of the US style of having an "independent counsel," before an impeachment trial first starts. A better software would have been a parliamentary system—which lost by one vote over a presidential system in the 1987 Constitutional Convention.

But the entire design of our constitutional democracy may even be flawed. We suspect our constitutional software is even full of its own version of viruses.

How else would you explain the fact that electoral victors in most parts of the country are still determined by the amount of money they can throw in a contest? That winning a post at the Senate—the body we have realized is crucial to our constitutional democracy—requires that you have at least a war chest of P100 million?

How else would you describe the case of senators ranting that all they did was to uphold constitutional processes, when they suppressed evidence against an impeached president?

WE received the following brusque e-mail from a Matt Zobian messaging from the United States, reacting to our Wednesday column ("We can't afford any more People Power"):

It's easy to point out where this abrasive, pontificating writer got it totally wrong—for instance that we, or most Filipinos, think that President Macapagal could ever be a "messiah."

However, he does make an important point:

"Your country will continue to suffer 'People Power' revolutions. Your country will continue to suffer political unrest. Your country will continue to suffer economic stagnation."

"Why? Because too many Filipinos are like you. Please don't be offended by that statement, because I'm sure you are a good person. But the point is, so is Erap Estrada. So are his supporters. So was Marcos. So is GMA. So are your readers."

"Filipinos are good people. The Philippines' problem is NOT too many 'evil people.'"

"The problem is that you and your countrymen have a messianic complex; you idly hope that the magical deliverance of your country from 'evil and corruption' rests in the hands of that one fair, wise, elusive leader that will one day sweep your nation clean. You seek him/her out, hoping, praying, 'Oh God, please let her be the one. Let her be the one who finally rids us of our corruption and poverty!'"

"This, of course, is absurd. (And invites more corruption, ironically, because you concentrate power in politicians' hands.) One person does not a government, or country, make. And so your country will always be disappointed, and will continue to suffer these upheavals."

"Rather than faith in a person, you and your countrymen should try faith in some enduring principles: freedom, rights and rule of law. I'm not talking about lip service, here. Yes, your Constitution says all the right things. But do you practice them? If you practice them, then in a generation or so, your country will have made marvelous progress."

"So instead of looking for a messiah, you and your countrymen should be trying to change yourselves! Good luck, and *mabuhay!*"

A PHOTO press release that came out in nearly all newspapers' business sections we found a bit disturbing was smelter-firm Pasar chair Carlos Dominguez meeting with President Macapagal together with executives of Glencore International, the firm's Swiss controlling stockholders.

It's great of course for the new President to touch base with foreign investors, to ensure them that the new administration will be investor-friendly. But that meeting was on the *second* day of Macapagal's presidency, when she had tons of urgent work to do that she hadn't even filled up yet her new Cabinet. The signal that photo is sending the business community is that Dominguez has such strong connections in the new administration that he can set up such a meeting on a moment's notice, even on Macapagal's probably busiest day ever. Dominguez's younger brother Paul was one of the first appointees of the President, as presidential adviser on regional development and chair of the Development Bank of the Philippines.

The worst that could happen to Macapagal's administration at this point is that just as she hasn't even warmed her seat, a new set of big-business groups has an inside fast-track to the presidency, or even just the impression that such is happening. Since the Marcos regime, we of course had coined a term for that.

Comments: rtiglao@inq7.net

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Dismayed

(Conclusion)

THERE'S
THE RUBConrado
de Quiros

BUT there's an even more compelling reason to rue the conduct of the negotiations last Friday night. My letter-writer says prudence dictated that the negotiators kept the discussions secret for the moment. I disagree. Prudence should have dictated the negotiators kept the public abreast throughout the course of it.

More than the fact that Gloria and company owed it to the people who had brought them to this pass, it was the wise thing to do. If People Power 2 had any lesson to teach, it was above all the dazzling one of the wisdom of transparency. That lesson was staring Gloria and her negotiators right in the face, if they only had the wits to see it.

Transparency was the defining characteristic of People Power 2. It was the one thing that made it possible to begin with. It was the unprecedented openness of the impeachment proceedings—the defense had originally tried to ban television from them, arguing that public opinion would undermine the integrity of the process—that gave the public an unprecedented education in civics and drove them to the streets to drive another tyrant out of office. I do not know that we have to wait for scholarly treatises to realize the incredible impact of the trial, which was watched more avidly than "Rosalinga," on the public mind.

That was what made People Power 2 different from People Power 1. People Power 2 was purer and truer: It had no leader, it was in every sense of the term self-willed. It was the product of education made possible by—transparency. All of us knew corruption was rife in government. No one really knew—until the impeachment trial—the true face and form of it. It was the sudden luminous clarity of it that made the people mass at Edsa, aided in no small way by equally luminous and unrelenting provocation of Estelito Mendoza, Juan Ponce Enrile, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Tessie Aquino-Oreta and Ernesto Maceda. The people who went to Edsa last week were not an unthinking mob come to throw themselves off the cliff like lemmings, they were an enlightened multitude come to defend their rights as citizens.

We should just have trusted our negotiators? Our negotiators should just have trusted us!

It sets a ugly precedent. You presume to know what is best for the people from the beginning, you will presume to know what is best for them in the end. Which thwarts the very essence of People Power 2. Which is also

why I get very, well, dismayed, when I hear the new President promising to bring back normal times. If normal times mean turning the people back into passive spectators, or worse unwitting pawns, in the games politicians play—such as the conduct of the negotiations suggests—I prefer to live in unceasingly abnormal times.

I can agree that Jaime Dichaves' and Atong Ang's flight from justice was beyond the help of the current administration. Though it galls me to think that while it was apparent Erap would not last very long—the generals had signified their intention to defect days before they did—no one moved to take legal action to prevent the two crooks from escaping. But Aggie Bautista-Cabugao is right to insist on the rule of law and chastise me for being wayward there. The law was the first and last casualty of the past, it may not be the first and last casualty of the present.

I am at least comforted by the fact that the other crooks are still here. I just heard that Lucio Tan threw—believe it or not—a thanksgiving party at the World Trade Center last weekend. He adds ingratitude to venality. I leave Erap's loyalists to punish him for the first, I leave the courts to punish him for the second. I agree: We should not rush to judgment but use the awesome power of the media to educate and uplift. That is the very reason I've taken the tack I have.

If I do not share my two readers' optimism at what the new President can do, it is neither because I judge hastily nor because I have no wish to give her a chance. The President has been a senator for two terms and a Vice President for more than a couple of years. That is more than enough time to show one's mettle. The President herself has repeatedly said she believes in leadership by example. I do too, and take her at her word. But if the example of her past years in public service itself is anything to go by, I can only see that we have reason to be wary.

I do not doubt Gloria Macapagal-

Arroyo's intellectual capabilities, as I told a TV reporter when she asked me whether she better fitted the job description of president than Erap. Gloria is an economist and was an undersecretary of the Department of Trade and Industry before she ran for public office. She is as different from Erap in that respect as chess is to *jueteng*. But I doubt her moral fiber. Throughout the course of her stint as senator and Vice President, she never took any risks, she never took a stand on any issue, she never took issue with any issue. What she did was have herself photographed cradling a child that had been taken out of a burning orphanage and putting leis on returning OFWs. The only time she spoke out against the rottenness in Erap's rule, whose stench could be smelled from here to Timbuktu, was in October last year, and probably not from a sense of oppression but from a sense of opportunity. She is as similar to Erap in that respect as Asiong Salonga is to Nora Aunor.

I should think I am fully justified in my agnosticism. I do wish to give her a chance—to prove me wrong, to prove her past wrong.

I believe in the awesome power of the media and the need to wield it with responsibility and wisdom. But I believe even more in the awesome power of the people, which the people have regained for themselves by themselves over the past several months, and the need to wield it with strength and grace. I believe that in the fragile stage of Gloria's incumbency, she needs all the help she can get. But I believe even more that in the delicate stage of People Power's evolution, it needs all the boost it can get.

In the end, what gives me unbridled optimism that things can change in this country is the faith, or hope, or trust that the people will be there to see they do—in spite of, if it cannot be because of, their government. We now have a vigilant, even militant, people, made so by outrage and enlightenment, by incandescent thought and blazing action. I cannot see how we may allow their power to dissipate into nothingness by being inordinately or obsessively riveted toward the new President. I can see only how we may keep it alive, fanning its fires, burnishing it glow, with all the talent and ferocity we can muster.

I cannot be a columnist and do any less.

Comments are welcome at
dequiros@vasia.com

Sanlakas' view
of things

THE MORE things change, the more they stay the same. With the crocodile booted out from Malacañang, the vulture enters the Palace. While the people rejoice at the ouster of the monster in Malacañang, we sorrow at the impending theft of their victory by a new set of *trapos* and a band of *balimbing*.

The struggle to dust Erap from power was a fight of good against evil but now the people are left with just the lesser evil. The people wanted good government, but all they got was a Macapagal administration. Erap's ouster is the people's will but Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is not the people's choice.

With the assumption to power of Macapagal, a new stage in the people's struggle for social change begins. With the solid backing of the elite, the military and the United States, she is poised to pursue the vicious policy of globalization that is a scourge to the working people that neither trust and approve of her. Sooner than later, her true colors will unfold for all to see.

The litmus test of her regime will be the question of Estrada's fate. The people hope for reconciliation but they hunger for justice even more. Erap and his accomplices

must be arrested and tried for his crimes against the people.

Now we dare Macapagal's partisans within the progressive movement—Joma Sison's followers in the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Kilusang Mayo Uno. They justified their opportunist tactics of an alliance with Macapagal on the alibi of "fighting one enemy at a time." With Macapagal now firmly at the helm of the reactionary state, we ask them, who now is the main enemy?

We vow to remain faithful to the Filipino people's quest for good government and the working people's struggle for social change. While the middle class vows vigilance on Macapagal, the working class pledges resistance.

If Macapagal appeals that she be given a chance, we contend that it is the people who must be given an opportunity for change. It is Macapagal who has the burden of proving herself to the people who are cynical with the *trapos* and turned off by their rottenness.—WILSON FORTALEZA, national president, Sanlakas, 252 Lava Townhomes, Calderon Street cor. Commonwealth Avenue, Barangay Old Balara, Diliman, Quezon City

Tips on dealing with the NSO

HAVE you tried securing a birth, marriage or death certificate from the National Statistics Office (NSO)? Then you would probably have felt the same frustration that I experienced because of the wasted money, time and effort that go with the undertaking, especially, if it is your first time to do so.

Would you believe that I only got the desired certificates after the third filing? *Ang daming nasayang talaga.*

As part of a true Christian's duty to be of service to others, may I share important pointers so that others may get the right result on their first try:

• Be very careful in transferring the data from your original source document to the NSO form. Make sure that you do not interchange the middle with the last name.

• Pay special attention to the registered late portion in the NSO form. In my case, the date of birth is not the same

as the actual date of the birth's registration. Examine your source document (original) very closely because sometimes the difference in the dates is not obvious. Look at the date near the signature of the issuing officer.

• Take note of the "printed security paper" portion. If the NSO certificate required is for travel abroad, be sure to put a check on the yes block.

• It is prudent to secure at least two copies of the NSO certificate required for travel abroad because it will be required by the Department of Foreign Affairs and the embassy concerned.

• Although the NSO opens at 7 a.m., do your best to be at the filing office (located at East Avenue opposite the Social Security System main office in Quezon City) as early as 6 a.m., so that you can pay at the cashier's window by 7:30 a.m. If you arrive at 8 a.m., you will be lucky to finish your

A tactic to justify
acquittal

I BEG to disagree with Neal Cruz when he wrote in his column last Jan. 19 that the prosecution can present all the evidence they want and the Dirty Eleven would still acquit the President in the end. The concerned senators knew that the exposure of the smoking gun would obliterate their chances of voting not guilty in the end.

Malacañang knew this too and it did not want to put its cohorts in a very precarious situation to vote for acquittal beyond reason. It feared that the contents of the envelope would enable the prosecution to wrap up the case, forcing some senators to change sides. Malacañang's issuance of the marching orders to block the opening of the envelope was therefore not an error but a tactical move to justify the acquittal vote.

What it did not anticipate was that it would set off a political maelstrom of such fury that it blew away the President out of office.—GRACIANO N. LABAYOG, 403 Kayumanggi St., Plainview, Mandaluyong City

transaction by 12 noon.

• When the NSO cashier issues the corresponding official receipt (bring sufficient funds to cover the P25 per copy of certificate, for the application), the supposed date of release is indicated. To avoid wasting time in following up the certificate, provide for a two-day allowance from the indicated date of release. Releasing is at the NSO office along Edsa which is about 20 meters from the corner of the intersection with Quezon Boulevard. Also check the OR to ensure that you fall in line in the A or B section.

May I request the local media people in the different municipalities and cities in the provinces to disseminate this "public service" for the benefit of all our *kubabayans*.—ARNULFO A. DEOGACIAS, Jehovah's Witness, Carenean Congregation, Dagupan City

PHILIPPINE QUALITY AWARD WINNERS' FORUM

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The Philippine Quality Award (PQA) was established as a national system of awards to promote quality excellence in both private and public sector organizations. It is the Philippine equivalent of the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award of the U.S.A. As the national quality award program, the PQA is a strategy to sustain the country's economic growth and strengthen the global competitiveness of its products, services and processes.

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As the national quality award program, the PQA annually holds a WINNERS FORUM which features the current PQA winners and promotes sharing of their best management practices and learning from the award process. The Chief Executive Officers of the successful winner-organizations present benchmarks and world-class practices, discuss the benefits of the Award, and share how the criteria help them to continue to improve. These winners serve as benchmarks and models of excellence for other organizations to emulate.

DATE : FEBRUARY 6, 2001
TIME : 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
REGISTRATION : 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
VENUE : The Auditorium, Ateneo Professional Schools Bldg., Rockwell Center, Makati City

PARTICIPATION FEE PER PERSON:
P900.00 (Public Sector)
P1,000.00 (Private Sector)

Note: Check payments should be made payable to PQA FOUNDATION, INC.

ORGANIZING AGENCIES:

Department of Trade and Industry, Philippine Quality Award Foundation, Inc., Ateneo Center for Continuing Education, Development Academy of the Philippines, Philippine Society for Quality, Philippine Quality and Productivity Movement, Civil Service Commission, National Wages and Productivity Commission, Department of Budget and Management, Philippine Association for Technological Education, and Management Association of the Philippines.

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For more information, please call the Secretariat c/o DTI-Center for Industrial Competitiveness at telephone numbers 890-4889, 890-4911 locals 463, 464, 449 or 535; fax number 897-5554 or 890-4861 or email at cic@dti.gov.ph.



SPEAKERS AND PRESENTORS:

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Mr. Filemon T. Berba, Jr.

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Ms. Edith Ramirez
(Astec Power, Inc.)

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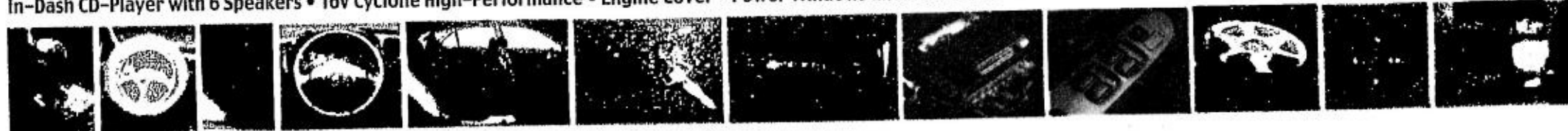


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The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

Security tight in Tiananmen Square

BEIJING—Beijing police on Tiananmen Square Thursday maintained nearly unprecedented levels of surveillance for followers of the banned Falun Gong, as the United States renewed its condemnation of the crackdown on the spiritual movement. Large numbers of police patrolled in and outside the square following Tuesday's self-immolation of one follower of the group and similar suicide attempts by four

others in the middle of the vast square.

Few Falun Gong followers were seen being apprehended by police on the square Thursday morning, as security forces continued to question all Chinese entering the square and inspecting identification papers and bags.

"I haven't seen very many arrests on the square during the holiday," a worker on the square said of China's ongoing week-long Lunar New Year holiday.

"In China you have freedom of belief, but your beliefs should never go against the national government," he said.

Meanwhile, the United States Wednesday renewed its condemnation of China's crackdown on the Falun Gong movement and urged Beijing to release all group members detained for peacefully exercising rights to "freedom of religion, freedom of belief and freedom of conscience." **AFP**

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LIKE what their Filipino counterparts did to their deposed president, Indonesian students give the thumbs-down sign as they shout "Gus Dur resign!" during a protest outside the parliament in Jakarta, Jan. 25. Gus Dur is the nickname of President Abdurrahman Wahid. Demonstrations demanding that Wahid resign continue in Jakarta and other cities in Indonesia. **AP**

Protesters urge Wahid to quit

JAKARTA—Indonesia's largest Muslim organization has warned of social chaos if parliament succeeds in ousting embattled President Abdurrahman Wahid for alleged corruption, media reports said Thursday.

"Bloodshed will ensue and the state will be devastated," Akiq Zauman, a spokesperson for the 30-million-member Nahdlatul Ulama, told The Jakarta Post. Wahid led the Islamic group for 13 years before he became head of state in 1999.

Political tensions in the capital have risen recently, with almost daily anti-Wahid protests.

On Thursday around 1,000 people, mostly students, demonstrated peacefully outside the parliament demanding that the president resign. Similar rallies were held in the cities of Bandung and Solo on Java island, and Makassar, the capital of South Sulawesi province.

A 50-member panel of lawmakers was scheduled on Thursday to complete an investigation into Wahid's possible involvement in two multimillion-dollar corruption scandals.

Next Monday, it will present its findings to the 500-member legislature. The parliament will then decide whether to initiate lengthy proceedings against Wahid, a move that could lead to his impeachment.

Earlier this week, Wahid infuriated lawmakers when he walked out of a hearing by the parliamentary panel. He accused it of character assassination and questioned the legality of the probe.

Critics of the president have accused him of being unable to stem graft and fix the nation's many economic and social problems, including rising ethnic and separatist violence.

Wahid has countered that the corruption allegations against him are part of a wider campaign of destabilization against his administration by forces opposed to his democratic reform agenda. He has blamed the same forces for a series of bombings and for other outbreaks of civil unrest.

Zauman said Wahid's followers revere him as a spiritual leader who "carries an angel on his shoulders."

Additional to the clerics' warning, hundreds of thousands of members of a militia-like youth wing of Nahdlatul Ulama have threatened to descend on Jakarta to protect Wahid from anti-government street protests. **AP**

Kabila son proclaimed Congo head

KINSHASA—The Democratic Republic of Congo's provisional parliament proclaimed Gen. Joseph Kabila head of state Wednesday as international pressure mounted for an end to the war which has split the former Zaire in two.

The 225 members of the 300-seat parliament present in the People's Palace adopted unanimously, with a raised-hand vote, a motion that the 32-year-old son of assassinated president Laurent Kabila be "invested with the constitutional powers devolving upon the president of the republic and head of state."

He is expected to take the oath of office Thursday before the Supreme Court.

A second parliamentary motion proclaimed Laurent Kabila, shot by a bodyguard on Jan. 16, a "national hero."

Most of the members of the parliament, which was created last year and has its official seat in the southeastern city of Lubumbashi, were chosen by a government-supervised commission. The others were appointed by the late president.

The government appointed Gen. Kabila to head the state on Jan. 17, according to Justice Minister Mwenze Ko-ngolo because the DRC was "on the verge of calamity and chaos and we had to be responsible."

The government said that Laurent Kabila, a former Marxist rebel who seized power in May 1997, died in Harare the following day after having been flown to the Zimbabwe capital for emergency medical treatment. **AFP**

Mahathir: Islamic party welcome to join coalition

KUALA LUMPUR—Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said Thursday that he would not stand in the way of his most formidable rival, an Islamic fundamentalist party, from joining the governing coalition.

The open-arms approach comes as Mahathir's party, the United Malays National Organization, is trying to agree on a format for talks with the Pan-Malaysia Islamic Party aimed at bridging divisions between Malay Muslims, the country's largest ethnic group.

The Islamic party, or PAS, made significant gains into the Malay Muslim vote in elections in 1999, forcing Mahathir's party to rely on the support of non-Malay parties in the governing Barisan Nasional coalition to retain two-thirds majority support in Parliament.

Mahathir, responding to a question from reporters during a visit to his home state of Kedah in north-

ern Malaysia, said that Umno wouldn't stop PAS from joining the coalition, but other partners representing Chinese and Indian minorities would have a say.

"If PAS wants to join BN, it is up to the other BN component parties to decide," Mahathir was quoted as saying by Bernama, the national news agency. "Umno will not stand in the way."

PAS has made no hint that it wants to join the government and its leaders would be wary of being co-opted. The fundamentalists control two of Malaysia's 13 states and is the strongest member of a four-party opposition coalition.

It has agreed to meet with Umno for talks about Malay unity, but has said that it wants to expand the agenda to issues affecting all Malaysians such as justice, corruption, the economy and democratic reforms. **AP**

Militiaman gets 12 years for 1999 East Timor rampage

DILI, East Timor—In the first successful prosecution for the destruction of East Timor in 1999, an international court sentenced a pro-Indonesian militiaman to 12 years in prison for murder.

Joao Fernandes, 22, a member of the Merah Putih (Red and White) militia gang, was found guilty of killing a pro-independence activist in the town of Maliana, close to the border with Indonesian-held West Timor, on Sept. 8, 1999.

"This judgment should be enforced immediately," said presiding judge Luca Ferrero. The Italian justice presided over a three-man panel of judges at the Dili District Court.

Hundreds of people died and most of East Timor was destroyed

when the Indonesian Army and its local auxiliaries went on a rampage after voters decided to break away from Indonesia in a UN-sponsored independence referendum in Aug. 1999.

Some 250,000 East Timorese were forced from their homes and many fled to West Timor. Tens of thousands are still waiting for repatriation to East Timor. Most militiamen also fled with the retreating Indonesian troops.

The United Nations is administering East Timor during its transition to full independence, expected next year.

Twelve other former militiamen accused of murder during the violence are in detention in East Timor waiting for their trials to start. **AP**

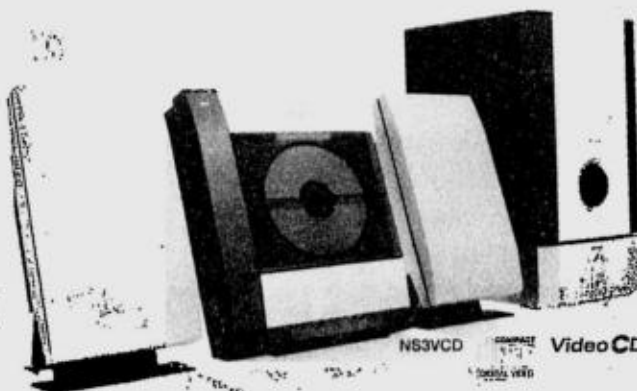
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Oil tanker captain, 13 crew members in Galapagos arrested

PUERTO BAQUERIZO MORENO, Ecuador—Ecuadorian authorities Wednesday said they have arrested the captain and crew of the oil tanker responsible for a spill that threatens the environmentally sensitive Galapagos Islands.

The arrests come as an international crew of workers cleaned up some seven tons of oil off the beaches of Santa Cruz island, hoping to prevent an ecological disaster in the world-famous nature preserve.

Tarquinio Arevalo—captain of the grounded Ecuadorian tanker Jessica—and 13 of the ship's crew members are under arrest, said the head of Ecuador's merchant marine, Adm. Gonzalo Vega.

"Captain Arevalo is under arrest and cannot give any statements to the national or international press... because he may feel pressured to change his statements," Vega said.

Some 600 tons of oil has leaked from the Jessica since it ran aground Jan. 15 off San Cristobal, causing a 1,200-sq.-km. slick.

Arevalo and his crew could face charges of negligence and violation of maritime law, said Vice Adm. Fernando Donoso, commander of Ecuador's Navy, said late Wednesday.

Once the investigation is completed Arevalo and his crew will face a jury of captains that will rule on their guilt or innocence, Donoso said.

The governor of the archipelago, Fabian Parra, said Wednesday that seven tons of oil has been removed from the shores of Santa Cruz with the help of buckets and shovels, and was dumped into 30 barrels.

"No animal appears to have been injured yet," Parra said.

Santa Cruz, 56 km northwest of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the town on the main Galapagos island of San Cristobal, is the site of the Darwin center for the preservation of species, named after Charles Darwin, whose pioneering work here in 1835 led to him developing his theory of evolution. **AFP**

WORLD BRIEFS

New Mori gov't scam

TOKYO—In Japan's latest government scandal, the Foreign Ministry on Thursday dismissed a senior official who it said embezzled money from a diplomatic travel fund and used it to buy race horses, golf club memberships and a luxury apartment. Katsutoshi Matsuo transferred about \$4.75 million from a fund for official overseas trips into his own bank account over a six-year period from 1993, the Foreign Ministry said in a report detailing the results of an internal probe. Though \$2.1 million of that was later spent on government business, Matsuo used at least \$467,576 for personal expenses, notably the purchase of a downtown Tokyo apartment and at least four race horses, the report said. **AP**

Protests over revote

BANGKOK—Angry mobs threw stones and clashed with police Thursday in several towns to protest the disqualification of candidates from the party that won this month's general elections, officials said. Police said protests erupted in towns across northeastern Thailand, a stronghold of telecom tycoon Thaksin Shinawatra whose Thai Rak Thai Party won the Jan. 6 elections. Initial results showed the party had won a majority, but the Election Commission on Tuesday annulled the victories of 32 of its candidates for cheating. The commission also threw out results from 30 other constituencies, many of them won by Thai Rak Thai allies. **AP**

Anwar plea rejected



ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR—Saying that the operation can be performed in Malaysia, the government has rejected imprisoned politician Anwar Ibrahim's request to undergo back surgery in Germany. Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Wednesday that the decision was based on the opinion of Malaysian medical experts and there was "no reason for Anwar to ask to go overseas." "I'm not here to comment on what kind of surgery he wants, but experts' opinion is that it can be done here," the national news agency, Bernama, quoted Abdullah as saying. **AP**

Dalai Lama at rites

ALLAHABAD, India—Extra security precautions were made Thursday at the world's largest religious gathering for the arrival of the Dalai Lama, supreme leader of Tibetan Buddhists, who came to hold a Hindu lamp above the sacred Ganges River and offer prayers at the Kumbh festival. The festival, which drew 32 million people to bathe Wednesday in the confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna Rivers, according to officials, has been vulnerable in the past to stampedes. Many worshippers pressed to see the Dalai Lama, as well as major Hindu religious leaders with whom he was meeting. **AP**

5 killed in Aceh

BANDA ACEH—At least five people were killed in fresh violence in Indonesia's troubled Aceh province, security officers and witnesses said Thursday. Separatist rebels Wednesday shot and killed two soldiers on a motorbike in a town in the north of the region, some 1,750 km northwest of Jakarta, said Lt. Col. Erda Bachtiar. Local people claimed troops killed a villager and burned dozens of houses when searching for the assailants. **AP**

Blair loses top man

LONDON—Prime Minister Tony Blair lost his top man in Northern Ireland and one of his most trusted political operatives Wednesday as Peter Mandelson resigned from the Cabinet for the second time in his short career. Mandelson, 47, who orchestrated Blair's election as Labor Party leader and the party's national election landslide in 1997, resigned after a controversy about helping a wealthy contact apply for citizenship. Mandelson's departure left a vacuum at the heart of British efforts to promote peace in Northern Ireland, and left Blair vulnerable to attacks about his own judgment in trusting Mandelson. **AP**

Israelis, PLO resume talks in Egypt spa

JERUSALEM—Israel and the Palestinians are to return to the negotiating table Thursday after Israel decided to resume talks in Egypt, a day after pulling out following the murder of two Israelis in the West Bank.

David Baker, a spokesperson for Israeli caretaker Prime Minister Ehud Barak said late Wednesday the talks will resume at the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Taba immediately after the funerals of the two Israelis "and will last for several days."

He said the talks would then be suspended ahead of the Feb. 6 election for prime minister, he added.

Barak had pulled out of the talks Tuesday following the murders, calling his negotiators home for consultations and putting on hold any further contacts with the Palestinians.

Israeli public television said the talks would resume Thursday afternoon and would be attended by all the members of the peace Cabinet.

The announcement confirmed the optimism of senior Palestinian negotiator Yasser Abed Rabbo, who said in Taba before the meeting even began that talks would resume on Thursday.

Abed Rabbo said he thought the delay in the negotiations "was not helpful."

"I think it is linked to some differences in the Israeli leadership; it's a war among the Israelis themselves."

He said that up until Tuesday the negotiations had been "serious" ones and had been "promising." **AFP**

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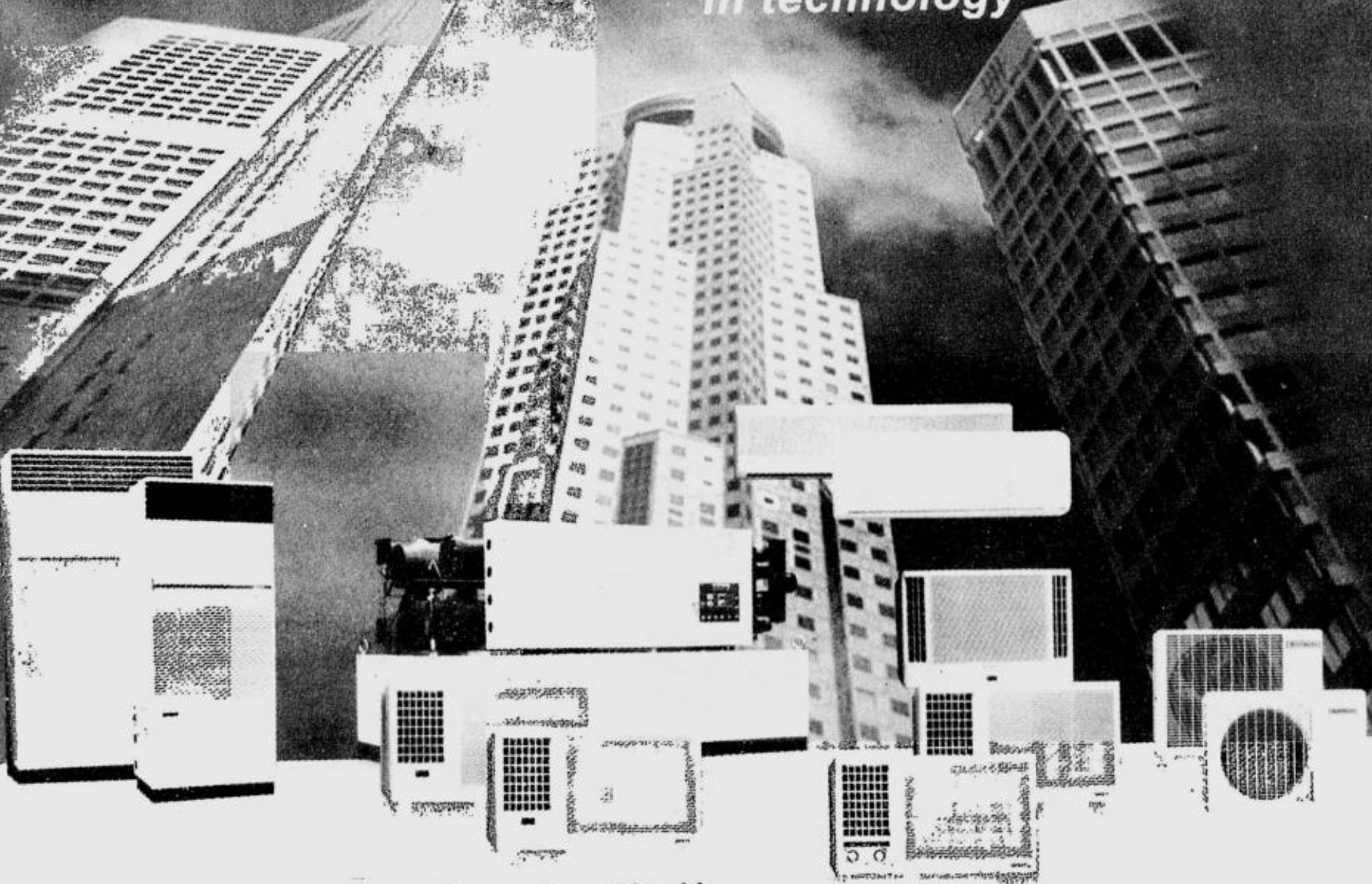
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Across the **NATION**

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Estrada ouster takes toll on alliesBY RAJ PADILLA
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—After People Power II, things have never been the same for allies of deposed President Joseph Estrada here.

Shortly after Estrada was ousted, Oscar Garin, former presidential assistant for Western Visayas, and City Councilor Joshua Alim decided to set aside their plans to run for governor and mayor in the May elections under the Lapiang ng Masang Pilipino, the ousted President's party.

Garin said he was pulling out of the race because of "intervening factors" which, he said, were unfavorable to him and already beyond his control.

Among the intervening factors, he said, was Estrada's downfall.

Garin said he lost a viable running mate after Vice Gov. Demy Sonza decided to run for governor instead under the Lakas-NUCD, which is now emerging to be again the country's dominant political party.

He said Sonza had asked him to be his vice governor under the then Iloilo Grand Alliance (IGA). But, he added, Sonza changed his mind following the scandal involving Estrada's acceptance of jueteng money and kick-

backs from tobacco taxes.

The IGA was eventually dissolved.

Another "intervening" factor was the withdrawal of former Rep. Albertito Lopez who was planning to regain his congressional seat in Iloilo's second district, said Garin.

As a result, he said he lost a big supporter in the district, which is now being controlled by incumbent Rep. Augusto Syjuco who is supporting the gubernatorial bid of former Rep. Niel Tupas.

Garin said he may be out of the race but he will still be active in the May elections as a campaigner. But

he refused to identify whom he would support.

Garin was appointed presidential assistant last Nov. 16 to replace Rene Villa who resigned shortly after Mr. Estrada was accused of accepting jueteng money and tobacco tax kickbacks.

Garin resigned from his post on Jan. 16, four days before the historic People Power II that kicked out Estrada from the presidency.

The ouster of Mr. Estrada also changed the plans of Councilor Alim, a long time ally of the former President, to run for mayor under the LAMP.

Former City Councilor Jerry Treñas, who is the Lakas-NUCD's candidate for mayor in Iloilo City, confirmed reports that Alim decided to join his group.

He said Alim agreed to seek reelection by joining his council slate.

Treñas said Alim informed him of his plan to join the Lakas-NUCD a week before Estrada was toppled down by what came to be known as People Power II.

"His decision to join (us) only made our group stronger," Treñas said.

"We should all remember that

Councilor Alim too has his own group. It's the same group which made him top the 1998 city council election," he added.

Alim was the only member of the Iloilo City council who did not vote for a resolution calling for Estrada's resignation last month.

Alim, a lawyer, was an anchorman of dyFM Bombo Radyo when he first sought a seat in the city council in the 1995 elections where he finished second to Treñas.

Alim is expected to be sworn in as a Lakas-NUCD member by Iloilo City Rep. Raul Gonzalez on Saturday.

2 new crime groups sow terror in NegrosBY CARLA GOMEZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Police in three northern towns and one city have been ordered to neutralize and arrest members of two newly formed crime groups in their areas.

Supt. Geary Barias, Negros Occidental police chief, issued the order after receiving reports that the two groups were monitored to be operating in the towns of Escalante, Toboso and Calatrava and San Carlos City.

Police investigators said the group headed by one Oldot Lopez was operating in the hinterland areas of San Carlos and Calatrava.

Another group, led by Israel Dogomeo, was sighted in Escalante and Toboso towns.

Dogomeo is allegedly an escapee from the Iwahig Penal Colony in Palawan. Police said the Dogomeo group was responsible for a series of robberies in northern Negros.

The Lopez group is allegedly involved in kidnappings.

Some of their members were said to belong to an anti-communist group.

Lopez and 11 of his men were charged with robbery in band and attempted murder before the Calatrava-Toboso Municipal Circuits Trial Court for the failed ambush of Calatrava Councilor Elpedio Secretaria last Sunday.

Police arrested two alleged members of the Lopez group identified as Bernabe Sarin and Dominador Justiniani shortly after the ambush attempt on Secretaria and his companions in Barangay Maaslob, Calatrava.

Calatrava police chief Darius Mascuñana said Secretaria was kidnapped by the Lopez group last year. The councilor was released after paying P20,000, he said.

Mascuñana said the ambush on Secretaria was triggered by the failure of the victim to give Lopez an ArmaLite rifle. Secretaria admitted to Barias that he indeed made the promise but did it out of fear.

Vigan gives Singson welcome fit for folk heroBY FRANK CIMATU
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

VIGAN, Ilocos Sur—Basking in his newfound popularity after the Edsa People Power 2 that he helped spark, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson was mobbed by hundreds of supporters and tourists in his house here on Monday, a day after returning to his home province.

While entertaining a stream of guests and supporters, Singson said he has had enough of politics.

He said he plans to relax for the next few days in Vigan.

"I do not plan to go to Malacañang yet. I would still be in politics but I would (stay) behind the scenes," he said.

Singson said unlike ousted President Joseph Estrada, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is not a close friend.

"Hindi ko kasi siya kapatid noon. Hindi naman kami gaanong close," he said.

"I don't want to be part of another Kitchen Cabinet," he said, referring to the so-called nocturnal partying of Estrada, his erstwhile friend. "Ayaw ko nang masunog uli."

But Singson knows he still cannot escape the limelight.

Noon at his residence, widely known here as "Baluarte," saw the governor being mobbed by dozens of young female college students from a university in Manila.

The girls took turns having their pictures taken with him. Some even asked for his autograph while the braver ones even kissed him.

"I don't want to go out anymore. I am always being mobbed," Singson said.

"Madali pala siyang lapitan. Mabait naman pala," said 20-



SINGSON nowadays is a magnet of adulation in the wake of his key role in bringing ex-President Joseph Estrada down. TOOTS SOBERANO

year-old Glenda Coloma.

"Kung hindi dahil sa kanya hindi natin malalaman ang mga ginagawa ni Estrada," Coloma said, while waiting for her chance to have her photo taken with what many regard here as a "new hero."

Singson returned to his bailiwick on Sunday, a day after attending the oath-taking ceremony of Ms Macapagal at the Edsa Shrine.

"Welcome Gov. Chavit Singson, Hero of Edsa II People's Power," read a large banner in front of the Vigan municipal hall.

The outpouring of attention was a different tension for Singson,

whose revelations on the alleged acceptance of Estrada of jueteng and tobacco tax payoffs, led to Estrada's ouster.

"Lagi na lang akong hinahalikan. Takot ako, baka makapag-asawa uli," he joked after the students left.

Next to approach Singson was a group of gays soliciting for Thursday's coronation of "Miss Gay Vigan." Next was a group of Catholic nuns who would like to seek audience with him. Next was an invitation to be a *ninong* (godfather) to a wedding next month.

All throughout, Singson's cellular phone incessantly rang,

mostly from Manila-based reporters calling for his reactions to the new administration.

Singson revealed that he was promised almost everything by the new administration.

"Everything under the sun, *maski anong* position. I was (asked to be) ... DILG (Department of Interior and Local Government) secretary but I refused," he said.

"I also don't want to run as senator. I've had enough. *Pahinga muna tayo*."

"*Tatakbo siguro ako* with Father Reyes," he said, referring to running priest Fr. Robert Reyes,

a key figure in protest rallies against Estrada.

Singson said he would just finish his term as Ilocos Sur governor and clear up the political alignment in his province.

He said he would announce next month his choice of his successor as governor.

As to his choice for Vice President, he has narrowed it to three.

"I think either (Sen. Raul) Roco or (Senate President Aquilino) Pimentel (Jr.) would be a good choice. *Puwede si Jose Velarde*," he said.

"Jose Velarde" was the name supposedly used by Estrada to open multimillion-peso bank accounts during his incumbency.

He said Estrada, his friend since the late 1960s, was not yet leaving the country because of the cases that would be filed against him.

"He does not know what hit him. He still does not know that there are cases going to be filed against him," Singson said.

He said his turning state witness would exonerate him from charges emanating from his connivance with Estrada in the illegal numbers game and tobacco tax kickback.

"According to Presidential Decree 749, *hindi ako madedamanda* because I'm a state witness. My lawyer has made that point during the (impeachment) trial. The defense even had to look that up. *Ang dapat tanungin nila si* (Charlie) Atong (Ang)," Singson said.

As to Ang, also a former friend in the "Kitchen Cabinet" who left the Philippines earlier, Singson issued this warning: "*Ipapahanap ko si Atong Ang sa Amerika*."

ROUNDUP**US group donates P15M to Vizcaya**

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—The New York-based Ford Foundation has given the provincial government here at least P15 million to start its education-related projects in the province's upland villages. The grant would be for the purchase of books, building of day care center facilities and training of teachers. The provincial government will build 26 day care centers in areas occupied by indigenous cultural communities as its project counterpart.

Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

2.2M fingerlings distributed

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Fishery officials have distributed 2.2 million tilapia fingerlings to fishermen and farmers maintaining fishponds and cages in Cagayan. Jovita Ayson, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources director here, said the fingerlings would increase the income of fishermen and farmers in the province.

Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Rapist father gets life term

BACOLOD CITY—A resident of Talisay City was sentenced to life in prison for repeatedly raping his three minor daughters. Judge Emma Labayen of the Regional Trial Court of Negros Occidental found Wilfredo Casiple Natal, a resident of Talisay City, guilty of raping his daughters aged 15, 13 and 12 from 1986 to 1991. "For these three daughters ... to file these cases against their own father not only show(s) a lot of courage but hatred (for) ... the ordeal," said the judge in his decision. The court said the girls' humiliation and their fear of testifying in court against their father are "something to be reckoned with by this court."

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

WW2 bomb found under Cebu house

CEBU CITY—A World War II-vintage bomb was unearthed in Sitio San Roque Kamagong, Barangay Lahug here Wednesday. The 100-lb bomb was buried beneath the house of Eugenio Bajo, 50, a Cebu City hall employee. His nephew, Sinforiano, was digging a hole for the construction of the basement when his crowbar hit something hard. Sinforiano said he got scared when he realized he just found a bomb. He called his uncle who called the Mobile Patrol Division, which sent the Special Weapons and Tactics Team. The Swat members got the bomb from the site and handed it to the Explosives and Ordnance Detachment of the Visayas Command. A bomb expert said the bomb was still active and could have exploded had Sinforiano hit its fuse.

Tonton Antogop, PDI Visayas Bureau

Chavit lawyers to pursue 'jueteng' case

BAGUIO CITY—The jueteng dossiers compiled by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson against ousted President Joseph Estrada will be reopened by human rights lawyers to prosecute Estrada and all officials these documents may inevitably implicate, Singson's lawyer said.

Lawyer Pablito Sanidad, Singson's counsel and former chair of the Free Legal Assistance Group (Flag), said he has offered Singson's documents to the Flag to "tie up all the loose ends" left when People Power II uprising cut short Estrada's impeachment trial.

Sanidad said one option may involve launching civil rights organizations "against an unholy alliance" between organized crime and local governments which surfaced during the trial.

"The reason there is always a recurrence of human rights violations, of graft, is that historically, the perpetrators (ousted by People Power) are allowed to get away with it," he said.

Prosecuting erring officials, from Estrada down to the lowest public official who benefited from jueteng, would end that cycle regardless of its repercussions on the

May elections, Sanidad said.

Singson's remaining documents, he said, will reveal an intricate network of government payoffs and protection rackets that had perpetuated plunder and organized crime in the provinces.

But Sanidad said President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo won't be "hurt" by these dossiers, which fueled Estrada's impeachment trial and ouster.

The Estrada administration linked Ms Macapagal to suspected jueteng financier Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda last year, after she quit the Cabinet and agreed to lead critics

under the United Opposition.

Estrada's lawyers were prepared to present suspected gambling lords as their witnesses for the impeachment trial had it proceeded, Sanidad claimed.

"Chavit came into jueteng only when Estrada came in. He was not given that strategic importance because Atong Ang was in control," he said.

He added that Singson had not been a party to the original gambling syndicate that Estrada allegedly wanted to take over before 1998. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Phivolcs raises Mayon Volcano alert to No. 3

LEGAZPI CITY—The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) yesterday raised the alert level for the likely eruption of Mayon Volcano to No. 3 and told people to brace for an eruption in a week.

"There's no end to the activities of Mayon during the last 10 days," said resident volcanologist Ed Laguerta as he plotted seismic and sulfur dioxide emission data.

Laguerta said if the crater continues to bulge, this would be an indication that magma is slowly coming up and could merely form a dome and not cause an eruption.

He said, however, that the continuous emission of gas and low

frequency volcanic quakes during the last 10 days are indications that new magma is being pushed up.

"When all of these trends continue to intensify, the volcano is sure to erupt soon," he said.

Laguerta added that the eruptions might occur late this month or early in February.

He said based on Phivolcs studies, Mayon eruptions had 1-year to 2-year cycles from 1891 to 1897 and most of the eruptions occurred in February.

"After (a) careful assessment of the present and recent conditions manifested (by) the Mayon Volcano, we are raising the alert status from alert level 2 to alert

level 3 effective today (Thursday)," he said.

Since the appearance of the lava dome was confirmed on Jan. 10, the volcano has been showing more signs of unrest.

"In the past we've, for example, the monitoring have reported numerous volcanic earthquakes, continued swelling of the edifice and very high gas outputs from the summit crater," Laguerta said.

He added that when the summit was visible on Jan. 22, two ash emissions were seen, that coincided with earthquakes.

"This means that the lava dome is active and is probably being fed by a column of magma be-

neath the crater. Close monitoring of the summit lava dome features also suggests some growth, supporting the idea that magma is ascending close to the crater surface," he said.

Laguerta said the six-kilometer permanent danger zone should be off-limits to anyone at all times and that residents living in front or beside the volcano's gullies should be extra alert for volcanic flows that could result from sudden explosions.

But the Phivolcs said it was not recommending evacuation as of now, except in villages that are within the six-kilometer permanent danger zone. *Ray Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Gloria asked to probe Erap 'war crimes'

DAVAO CITY—A Moro women's group yesterday urged President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to form an independent team that would investigate alleged rights violations during the all-out war declared by ousted President Joseph Estrada against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

The group said the team should also look closely into the effects of the war on communities in Mindanao.

Evelyn Carias, chair of the Khadija Moro women alliance, said they want the independent probe team to be granted powers to recommend the prosecution of government or military officials found liable for rights violations and the destruction of civilian communities during the war.

"If we have an independent probe team, then our people will have (an agency) to present their cases to. The probe team will help our people get justice," she said.

She said an independent probe team should also be given powers to review the cases of Moro residents who were earlier arrested on suspicion that they were members of the MILF.

Carias said 29 Moro residents who were arrested by the military on suspicion that they were part of an MILF force that ambushed a contingent of Army soldiers in Tarragona town, Davao Oriental, are still languishing in the municipal jails of Mati and Tarragona.

She said the investigation of alleged criminal offenses committed by soldiers, military and government officials during the war will substantiate Ms Macapagal's call for "healing" in the country.

"Only when justice is served can the healing process begin," she said.

Carias also suggested that the probe team be composed of human rights advocates and personalities and government officials who joined fact-finding missions initiated by

various groups in Central Mindanao last year.

The multi-sectoral Kalinaw Mindanao was deputized by Congress to conduct a fact-finding mission in Central Mindanao and the ARMM on June 24 to 26.

Sen. Teofisto Guingona joined members of the Kalinaw Mindanao during the fact-finding mission.

Kalinaw Mindanao organizers, in its fact-finding report, claimed that they uncovered evidence indicating that the military was liable for "war crimes" particularly in the provinces of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur.

Among the alleged rights violations and war crimes documented by the group were:

- The killing of 16 civilians due to indiscriminate bombings and summary executions in the towns of Matanog, Barira, Buldon, Datu Odin Sinsuat and Isulan in Maguindanao.

- Alleged food blockades in crossing Barira and Barangay Bayuga in Matanog.

- The massacre of eight Moro residents, including two children, in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat on May 17.

- The burning of 286 houses in Kapatagan, Lanao del Sur allegedly by government soldiers.

Carias said Congress failed to act on the fact-finding report.

The military, however, denied Kalinaw Mindanao's allegation and even challenged the group to produce evidence to back up their claims.

Officials of the Army's 6th Infantry Division based in Awang, Maguindanao, said the group's findings would probably be used to win international support for the cause of the MILF.

The military also claimed that the group deliberately omitted allegations of atrocities, including summary executions and rape, committed by the guerrillas. *Jowel Canaday, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

3 soldiers, civilian killed in MILF attack

COTABATO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) ambushed an Army truck in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao early Tuesday, killing three soldiers and a civilian applying to be a soldier.

Six other applicants were wounded.

The attack came hours after MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu likened the assumption to power of the new administration as "a new sun rising."

Kabalu had urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to immediately declare a ceasefire.

Kabalu said the government's "all-out war" policy, declared by President Joseph Estrada in March last year, still exists.

"Unless a ceasefire is declared," he said, clashes between government troops and MILF guerrillas would continue.

Army Maj. Julieta Ando, 6th In-

fantry Division spokesperson, said the truck had just delivered the body of a soldier slain during an encounter with the MILF on Sunday to his family in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat. *Edwin Fernandez and Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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Cabinet appointees alarm civil society

(From page A1)

posed of Patricia Sto. Tomas, former chair of the Civil Service Commission; Aniceto Sobrepeña, head of the Presidential Management Staff (PMS) under President Corason Aquino; Henedina Abad, dean of the Ateneo School of Government; Dr. Fiorello Estuar, former secretary of public works; and Carmencita Abella, former president of the Development Academy of the Philippines.

A staff member of the search committee told the INQUIRER last night that Victoria Garchitorena, whom Ms Macapagal has since appointed as PMS head, was now chair of the committee, and that there was another member, Fr. Anton Pascual, vice president of Radio Veritas.

The other Pagbabag members—artists, directors and singers—expressed apprehension over a “creeping trapism,” in reference to “trapos” or traditional politicians. (See story in Metro, Page A21.)

They said that after the efforts of the people at Edsa and other parts of the country to bring about a new system of governance, it appeared that the system was only taking a new face.

According to sources, among the appointees not on the short list are Secretaries Simeon Datumanong, public works; Pantaleon Alvarez, transportation; Richard Gordon, tourism; Jesus Alcorido, energy; and Sen. Raul Roco, education.

Alcorido has since declined his appointment. (See story on Page A1.)

“The only names that jibe with (the choices) of the search committee are those of Vicky Garchitorena, (Corason) Dinky Soliman and Renato de Villa,”

said a source.

Soliman has been appointed social welfare secretary, and De Villa, executive secretary.

New appointments

In Malacañang, the President announced eight more names to add to her administration's officials, but the vice presidency remained vacant.

Ms Macapagal met with 15 of her new officials for the first time and later introduced the Cabinet to the media at the Heroes Hall.

Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado and Alcorido were not present.

The President said she had appointed Batangas Rep. Eduardo Ermita as her adviser for the peace process. She had previously named Ermita as national security adviser, a post that has since been given to former Armed Forces chief Gen. Lisandro Abadia.

The Cabinet still needs a foreign secretary—a position that may be taken on by the next vice president, and secretaries for agrarian reform, agriculture, environment and natural resources, health, labor and employment, science and technology and trade and industry.

Those earlier appointed will be sworn in today.

Ms Macapagal also named Noel Cabrera, ousted President Joseph Estrada's press undersecretary, as acting press secretary.

Cabrera said his appointment had “caretaker status” for continuity in the position until the President decided on the new press secretary.

“I shall be keeping a low profile, as before,” Cabrera said.

He added: “I shall be focusing on re-assessing OPS (Office of the Press Secretary) policies and programs, strengthening our

working units and bureaus, upgrading our information networks, setting in place systems and procedures, and, very, very importantly, revitalizing our relations, interaction and cooperation with the press and the public in general.

“For administration views and developments, questions, clarifications, as well as face-to-face relations with the press both local and foreign, we will have a spokesman who still has to be named.”

Remonde et al.

The others appointed were: ● Serge Remonde, president of the Kapisanan ng Brodkaster ng Pilipinas, as press undersecretary for broadcast media.

● Ephraim Genuino, president of Trace Corp. and chair of Bigkis Pinoy, president of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

● Arturo Valdez, transportation undersecretary during the Ramos administration, the same post.

● Retired Gen. Leo Alvez, presidential adviser for military affairs. (Alvez declined the appointment.)

● Rene Villa, presidential assistant for Western Visayas in the past administration, was re-appointed to the same post.

● Jesus Dureza is now presidential assistant for Western Mindanao and officer in charge of the Mindanao Economic Development Council.

Accountability

Luz said both the business community and non-government organizations had been banking on the search committee, which was to submit names to the executive secretary and Presidential Management Staff for consideration for Cabinet positions.

“This is a good process because it is transparent and the members are accountable. They can check things out very rigorously regarding the prospective candidates,” he said.

However, he said his group was “surprised and concerned” at the selection process for the Cabinet, wherein the appointees had so far been mostly former senators and congressmen.

Luz said the President should not rush to fill up the posts in her Cabinet because there were many names to be considered.

He said certain appointments could still be reconsidered because these had not yet been formalized.

Luz stressed that the MBC was questioning, not any specific appointment, but the lack of a rigorous selection process and the uneven mix of Cabinet officials.

He also pointed out that, unlike other groups, the MBC was not lobbying for any of its members to be named to sensitive posts.

Flattery

Former President Fidel Ramos bristled at criticisms that people closely identified with him were now holding juicy posts in the Cabinet.

He also declared that he neither asked for nor accepted the post of ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary.

In a press briefing yesterday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, an irritated Ramos sought to douse speculations that he influenced the President in appointing “Ramos boys” to her Cabinet.

“If you say that I exerted influence, you’re flattering me too much,” he said.

Ramos, chair emeritus of Lakas-NUCD, also sought to justify the ap-

pointment of his party mates, such as former Rep. Hernando Perez and former Deputy Speaker Simeon Datumanong as secretaries of justice and public works. “They’re good people. They’re devoted people. They’ve risked their lives to serve this country,” he said.

Ramos also said Ms Macapagal's appointment of Datumanong was based, not on his membership in Lakas, but on his excellent track record as a leader of the Muslim community, regional governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and deputy speaker.

Besides, he added, “they’re now GMA’s people, they are their own people.”

Ramos pointed out that the other appointees such as Executive Secretary Renato de Villa, his own defense secretary, came from other parties.

While the Lakas members made recommendations, he said, it was the President who eventually decided whom she would name.

Ramos also clarified that he did not ask for or accept the post of ambassador, saying: “My status and title is simply that of a Mr. Citizen.”

He said the President had requested him to attend the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, as the Philippines’ senior representative “since he could not go because of his busy schedule.”

At the same time, Ramos said he would accept similar “one-time missions” such as the Davos trip to help promote the country and “tell the world that the difference between the Estrada administration and the new one coming in is a big, big one.”

He was scheduled to fly last night to Switzerland. With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr. and TJ Burgonio

Church...

(From page A1)

alleged P3.3-billion secret bank account.

The call by the CBCP president, Cotabato Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, came a day after Tatad insisted that he voted in accordance with his reading of the Constitution on the fateful Jan. 16 hearing of the Senate impeachment court.

Sen. John Osmeña, however, said Sunday that it was defense lawyer Estelito Mendoza who requested him, Tatad and nine other pro-Estrada senators to block the opening of a second sealed envelope containing the records of the Equitable PCI Bank account.

Lito Banayo, Estrada's former political adviser, confirmed in a TV talk show Osmeña's version of events that sparked the military-backed “People Power II” which toppled Estrada.

Quevedo told delegates to the National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal that the 11 senators should admit their error amid widespread perception that they had conspired to protect Estrada.

“The 11 senators should each issue their respective mea culpa for their vote,” Quevedo said in his speech to the assembly of 300 religious and lay leaders at the San Carlos Seminary in Makati City.

“They should also issue a collective mea culpa if there was indeed a conspiracy,” the Cotabato archbishop said.

He said the 11 senators must also do good deeds “to gradually regain the trust of the people who elected them into office.”

“They should not continue to be considered as men and women who seem to have conspired to conceal the truth,” Quevedo said.

He acknowledged that forgiveness might not come easily to the people who have ridiculed the pro-Estrada senators as the “notorious and shameless 11.”

“It will be difficult, but it’s possible,” Quevedo said.

The 11 senators who voted no were Tatad, Osmeña, Nikki Coseteng, Juan Ponce Enrile, Gregorio B. Honasan, Robert S. Jaworski, Blas F. Ople, Teresa Aquino-Oreta, Ramon B. Revilla, Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Vicente C. Sotto III.

Osmeña

In a talk with newsmen on Sunday, a day after Estrada abandoned Malacañang, Osmeña admitted the majority vote was “a political mistake” but correct from a legal standpoint.

The 11 senators claimed the sealed bank document had nothing to do with the Articles of Impeachment.

The prosecution said the documents would have proved that Estrada had amassed ill-gotten wealth by maintaining a P3.3-billion secret account with Equitable PCI Bank under the name of “Jose Velarde.”

Osmeña, however, denied the 11 senators voted in exchange for any concession from Estrada.

He instead blamed Mendoza who, according to him, “requested” him and the 10 pro-Estrada senators to block the prosecution's motion to unseal the envelope.

“It’s not true that there was a prior agreement among us,” Osmeña said in an interview with local radio dyLA on Friday night.

Tatad and some senators, like Jaworski, said they voted according to their conscience and reading of the law. They made no mention of any request from Mendoza who subsequently resigned as Estrada's defense lawyer.

Tatad said President Macapagal-Arroyo's call for a healing of the nation's wounds would not come about if her supporters continued to persecute him and the other senators.

Osmeña said he and seven other pro-Estrada senators had decided to band together, adding Ms Macapagal would have to deal with them as a group.

“We will not bargain separately,” he said.

Enrile said he planned to run for congressman in Cagayan but no longer under Estrada's party that, according to him, was a sinking ship.

The CBCP earlier offered its moral forgiveness to Estrada but pushed for the ousted President's criminal prosecution for graft and corruption.

The bishops also asked Estrada's children to stop blaming their father's friends for his downfall.

Quevedo said People Power II would not have happened had Estrada ignored the whims of his friends. With reports from Malou Gananzon-Apalisok, PDI Visayas Bureau

Pro-Erap groups march in Davao

(From page A1)

supporters of Estrada yesterday took to the streets here, chanting “Erap pa rin,” “Justice for Erap,” and “Gloria, resign!”

Members of the Tingog Kabataan Mindanao marched from the Magsaysay Park to the Rizal Park for a rally and an overnight vigil.

Organizers said they were hoping that their protest would spark similar mass actions nationwide.

“This is only the beginning of a series of mass actions across Mindanao and in other areas nationwide to show our support and desire for our president, Joseph Estrada, to return to power,” said Tingog Kabataan chair Richard Dexter Welborn.

On Jan. 19, the group threatened to storm a rally led by anti-Estrada forces at the Rizal Park at the height of “People Power II” which led to the downfall of Estrada.

The pro-Estrada march drew support from market vendors and residents of slum communities, considered Estrada bailiwicks, along Bankerohan and Agdao Streets and Quezon Boulevard. It also passed through the busy streets of C.M. Recto and Bolton.

Welborn, a criminology student of the University of Mindanao, said his group aimed to recreate “people power” in various parts of the country to push for Estrada's return to power.

“We are the true people power and we are the true democratic forces of this country because we respect the Constitution and due process. More importantly, our movement is not limited to Edsa because our people power is nationwide,” he said.

Unlike the “burgis” (bourgeoisie) who trooped to Edsa, Welborn said his group was composed of stu-

dents “committed to democracy,” vendors and poor people.

Tingog Kabataan questions the constitutionality of President Macapagal-Arroyo's rule although it respects Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. who administered the oath of office to her on Jan. 20, he said.

Davide fair

“Davide is a fair man. We believe he was merely doing his job when he swore in Arroyo to avoid a vacuum of leadership. Walang personal para sa kanya (We have nothing personal against him),” Welborn said.

Welborn said he did not receive any support from government officials under the Estrada administration. Funds for the rally, he said, were raised by “passing the hat” among Estrada supporters in the University of Mindanao and other schools.

But sources said members of

Tingog Kabataan had earlier sought financial and material support from pro-Estrada politicians, particularly from Edgar Ibuyan, chair of Barangay Bankerohan and known supporter of Estrada.

The group had also asked Ibuyan to persuade his constituents to join the march.

Ibuyan said he turned down the group's request. “I could not sacrifice the interest of my constituents for such activities. I still respect President Estrada but we have to follow and respect also our new leader,” Ibuyan said.

Rumors in Digos

In Digos City, rumors that Estrada was coming sent a flush of excitement among residents, particularly the poor.

Estrada, according to the “news” that circulated Wednesday, was supposed to stay in Barangay Kapatagan, in a still unfinished vacation house owned by a senator or a house supposedly owned by one of his mistresses, Guia Gomez.

Kapatagan, which is part of the Mt.

Mercado quits over Abadia appointment

(From page A1)

was named to the post, but had actually not been offered it.

“I would have to beg off because I promised the people who made this situation (People Power II) possible that I will not accept any government position,” Alvez said.

“I want to enjoy my retirement,” he said, adding that he preferred to go back to Cebu and just play golf.

Alvez, a 1966 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy, retired from the military service in 1997.

He was a classmate of Armed Forces chief Gen. Angelo Reyes, and has been credited for convincing Reyes to withdraw support from Estrada.

Jesus N. Alcorido, who was named energy secretary on Wednesday, cited legal impediments as the reason for his declining the appointment, according to his staff.

Alcorido is president and chief executive officer of East Asia Power Resources Corp., a position that, by law, disallows him from taking up the energy portfolio.

Problems

Mercado said at a press conference that he did not consult Estrada about his resignation, and that he brought the matter only to Ms Macapagal.

“When I talked to the President, I told her it is very important that the secretary of national defense and the national security adviser are a team,” he said. “If they are not on good terms, it will cause problems.”

Mercado's expected discomfort in-

volves the AFP's pension fund, the Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS).

In his early days as Estrada's defense chief, Mercado ordered the investigation of alleged irregularities in the RSBS, of which Abadia, as AFP chief of staff in 1991-94, was concurrent chair.

Mercado referred the alleged misuse of millions of pesos of pension money to the Senate blue ribbon committee, which in turn conducted its own investigation.

The blue ribbon committee recommended the filing of charges against Abadia and other RSBS officials. But the Office of the Ombudsman cleared them after giving weight to Abadia's defense that the RSBS was a private fund.

On Mercado's orders, the Department of National Defense brought the case to the Supreme Court. The case is still pending.

Not consulted

Mercado noted that he was not consulted on Abadia's appointment.

“How can I serve in the Cabinet together with a national security adviser when it was I who instigated the investigation against him?” Mercado said.

He said that had Abadia not been appointed, he would have “felt obligated to stay” longer at the DND to complete the reforms he had initiated, particularly the computerized bidding system for military supplies.

“I feel it's going to be uncomfortable,” he said, adding that his decision

was “a matter of principle” and that he had “nothing personal” against Abadia.

Reading from a prepared statement, Mercado said he was quitting his post after having done his share in the bloodless transition of power.

He also said checks and balances were needed to strengthen democratic institutions.

“It is for this reason that I reiterate my recognition of the legitimacy of the Macapagal-Arroyo administration and that I will personally oppose any attempts to destabilize or undermine its authority through adventurism and extraconstitutional means,” he said.

In answer to questions, Mercado said the appointment of his successor depended on the President.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr.—who, Mercado said, got in touch with him yesterday when word about his resignation started to circulate—and Batangas Rep. Eduardo Ermita are said to be part of a short list of candidates for the top DND post.

Mercado asked that his resignation not be viewed in the context of persistent talks about a counter-coup aimed at reinstalling Estrada as president.

“We should not read more into this resignation,” he said. “I don't believe it will destabilize the military organization.”

Willing to serve

Alcorido has refused to personally comment on the issue of his appointment.

“He (Alcorido) is willing to serve in the government,” East Asia Power vice

to Estrada's accounts.

Documents pertaining to the bank accounts of Estrada's mistresses like Laarni Enriquez, Joy Melendrez and Guia Gomez, as well as those of Jose Marcelo, Melvin Garcia and Jose Rizalista Marcelo will also be handed over to the private prosecutors.

With the transfer of the documents to the private prosecutors, the task of recovering Estrada's ill-gotten wealth has been transferred to the private prosecutors.

Bloodhounds

Arroyo said the private prosecutors could get the necessary court orders for the production of documents on the accounts of Estrada and his mistresses.

“These private prosecutors are all very good. They will pursue these cases against Mr. Estrada like bloodhounds,”

he said.

He said the House prosecutors had tried to have Estrada's foreign currency deposits opened during the impeachment trial but Estrada's defense panel opposed the move.

“It's easy now to get subpoenae duces tecum,” Arroyo said.

His remarks came in the wake of reports that Estrada's lawyers were complaining that the freezing of several bank accounts of Estrada with Citibank NA was done without “due process.”

A group of lawyers, who helped in the prosecution of Estrada in the impeachment trial, said the Bureau of Internal Revenue's freeze order on Estrada's deposits at the Citibank NA-Virra Mall branch in Greenhills, San Juan, was “legal.”

The Legal Assistance Group

(FLAG) also said that the BIR would freeze the assets of Estrada in other banks.

Tax reform

Lawyer Theodore Te said that under the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program BIR officials could freeze certain assets that may later be the subject of tax evasion cases.

“It's the discretion of the BIR commissioner,” Te said in a press conference at the Club Filipino. “The only issue there could be whether that discretion was exercised correctly.”

Arno Sanidad, FLAG coordinator for Metro Manila, said Estrada's lawyers were questioning the BIR's freeze order because it was the first time that the BIR exercised that power.

“It's never been used, but it exists, and it is a power of the BIR commis-

sioner,” Sanidad said.

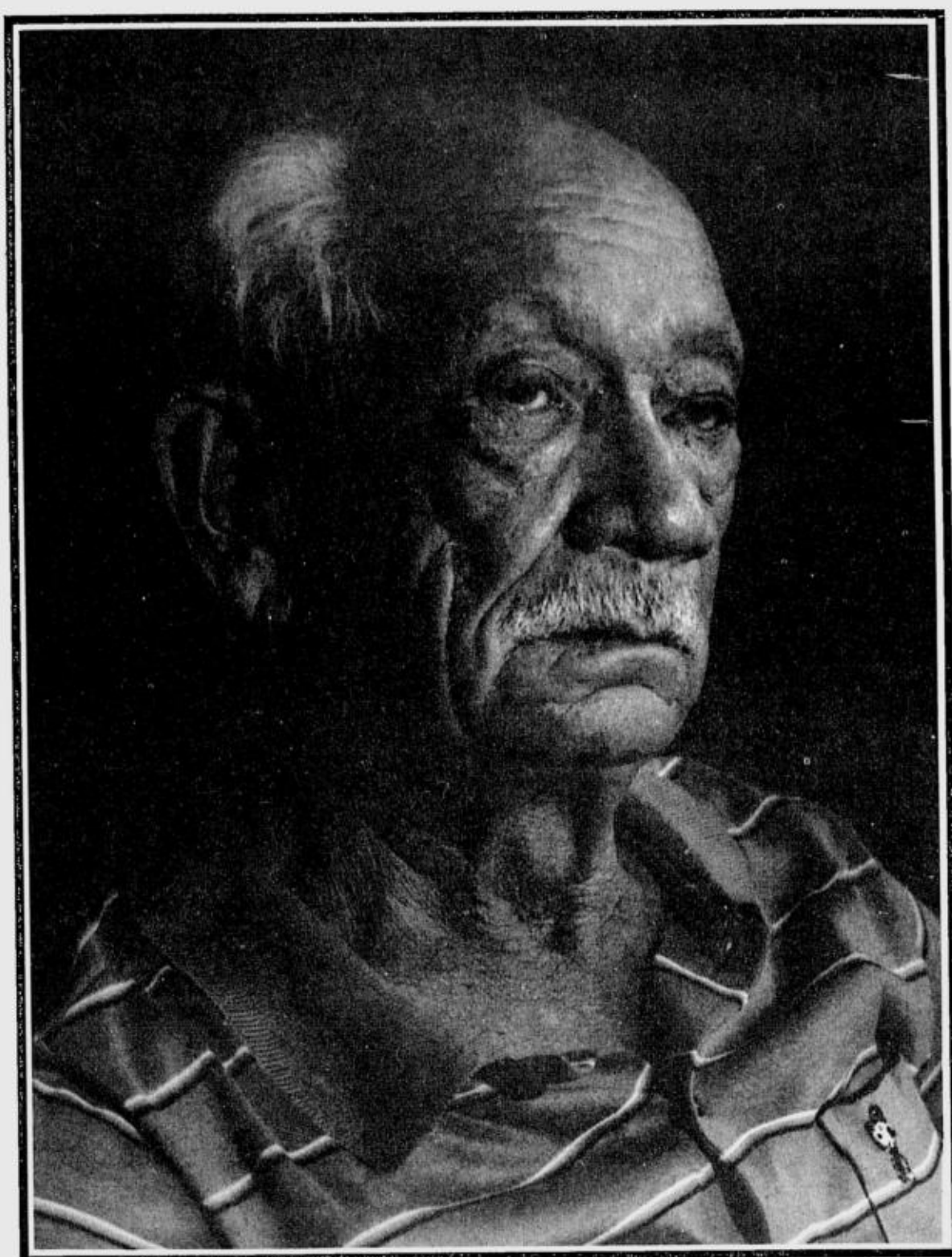
Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said that the two accounts frozen at Citibank Virra Mall were under Estrada's name.

Perez said that one was a peso account and the other was a dollar account. He said the freeze order on the account was only temporary and would depend on the BIR.

He said that the government could not touch the other deposits of Estrada because “we are not really certain in whose names the deposits were made.”

Perez also said that he could not freeze the account under the name of Jose Velarde and Kelvin Garcia.

“I do not have the power to freeze. It's only the court or the BIR which has the power,” he said.



Joaquin 'Chino' Roces Foundation, Inc.

We believe that, unless justice is served,
no meaningful change for the nation
can result from the popular rising that unseated
Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

We, therefore, fully support the position,

**No forgiveness without restitution,
no reconciliation without punishment.**

And we urge the government of
President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to promptly
institute legal proceedings against
Estrada and his partners in crime.

Finally, we call on civil society to remain
vigilant and uncompromising.

DECADE'S DREAM DEAL

Tanduay bags Ildefonso

Welcoat, Shark make it

BY DENNIS EROA

IT'S Welcoat-Shark II with a little help from Ateneo-Pioneer.

Ateneo-Pioneer concluded its inaugural campaign on a torrid note, ambushing Hapee Toothpaste, 78-75, yesterday in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

The Blue Eagles finished at the bottom of the five-team semifinal cast but their sixth win in 15 games closed the door on the Sparklers' bid to force a final playoff via the 4-of-5 incentive.

Hapee dropped to 6-7 overall and 1-2 in the semis with two more remaining games.

Shark is hungry for revenge. Coach Leo Austria's charges lost 0-4 to the Paintmasters in the best-of-seven title series for the Chairman's Cup last year.

Erick Ferrer and Enrico Villanueva starred for the Blue Eagles, who duplicated their 64-55 eliminations wins over the hard-luck Sparklers.

Power-playing Rich Alvarez was ejected after a punching foul on burly Junie Lopez in the third quarter but Ferrer's snipings and Villanueva's inside plays bailed Ateneo out of trouble.

In the second game, Blu Sun Power scored an all-time low two points in the fourth period but survived Montaña Jewels, 61-56, for a 7-6 record.

Meantime, Welcoat's Ren Ren Ritualo emerged as new MVP leader with Shark's Chester Tolomia close behind. Ritualo piled 405 statistical points, 27 points more than Tolomia.

Baguio scores

BAGUIO'S Pines City High and Laguna's P. Guevarra Memorial High posted lopsided victories yesterday to complete the semifinal cast in the all-Luzon finals of the 17th Coke Go-for-Goal under 16 football tournament at the Philsports field in Pasig City.

Mark Signabon and Joseph Sotelo scored two goals apiece to power the Pines City High booters to a 5-1 triumph over Rizal titlist Taytay High.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. South Rim 2. Sovereignty 3. Latin Beat 4. Hyperbid/Top Quest 5. Amazing Joe
 Race 2—1. Allusion 2. Simlong
 Race 3—1. Prince of Africa 2. Fire Mouth 3. Sweet Annifer 4. Baby Maxxine
 Race 4—1. Stately Emblem 2. Altron 3. Join the Fun 4. Little Voices 5. Bullit Express
 Race 5—1. Time Capsule 2. Respect the Ace 3. Super Dancer 4. Bambino
 Race 6—1. Be Ready 2. Golden Tale 3. Naughty 4. Rainmaker 5. Boomerang
 Race 7—1. Reign of Glory 2. Ang Seaman 3. Princely Native 4. Radio Airwaves 5. Cara Bambina
 Race 8—1. Always Remember 2. Alexander/Free Entrance 3. Kingair 4. Breakaway Artist 5. Parola Sunrise
 Race 9—1. Ever Green 2. Aquarius Best 3. Kala Star
 Race 10—1. Sparkling Sky 2. Expediter 3. Musika 4. Kay Rutina 5. Hot Lips/Dressed to Impress
 Race 11—1. Moonlight Kisses 2. Banahaw Blues 3. Magara 4. Leverage Buyer 5. Wag Inqay

BY AL S. MENDOZA

DANNY Ildefonso signed the richest deal ever in Philippine sports history yesterday, joining Tanduay for P96 million spread over 16 years.

And that amount involved only his basic pay of P500,000 a month.

The perks could total to about P20 million more as Ildefonso re-wrote all records in the PBA books, easily surpassing the previous high of P46-million inked by Alaska's Kenneth Duremdes.

In the new contract, Ildefonso's bonus alone per game won is P70,000 in the eliminations. A game won in the semifinals was reportedly pegged at P100,000.

The contract will expire in 2016. By then, Ildefonso will have turned 40.

"It has really been my dream to play for Tanduay when I was still a kid," said Ildefonso, 24, who won MVP honors in the 2000 PBA season. "Everything seems to be falling into place."

The 24-year-old, 6-foot-6 Ildefonso, from Urdaneta, Pangasinan, signed the offer sheet yesterday afternoon, shocking cage kibitzers and officials alike over the sudden turn of events.

"It caught us by surprise," said San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichicho. "Danny even practiced with us today." (See related story.)

The odyssey began for Ildefonso three days ago when his agent, William Ong, offered the SMB star to Tanduay owner Bong Tan. The negotiations lasted two days.

A highlight of Tanduay's trade was an offer for San Miguel Beer to own Tanduay's first draft choice for 2002, 2003 and 2004.

But before Tan gave the green for Ildefonso's entry to Tanduay, he told David de Joya, Tanduay manager, to inform San Miguel's Bert Villa Abille of the contents of the contract.

Abille reportedly told De Joya that SMB would match Tanduay's offer.

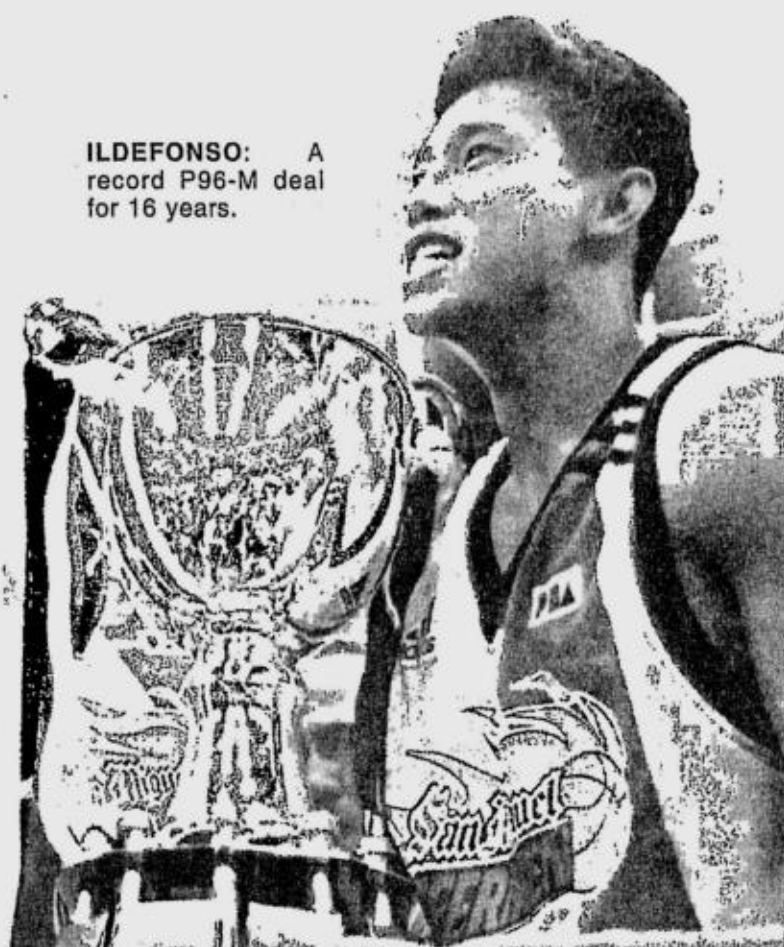
Henrich Tan Khoo signed for Tanduay, inking the contract somewhere in Pasig City that gave Ildefonso the Dream Deal of the Decade.

Tan submitted the contract to the PBA offices yesterday afternoon.

San Miguel has five days to either match the contract or release Ildefonso.

Tanduay has been into a massive rebuilding process of its team since December. Already, it had gotten Derrick Pumaren as coach and players Bong Hawkins, Noli Locsin and Bonel Balingit.

ILDEFONSO: A record P96-M deal for 16 years.



Can't blame Danny-Uichicho

BY MARC ANTHONY REYES

SAN MIGUEL Beer coach Jong Uichicho last night said he was "100 percent sure" SMB will match the offer sheet tendered by Tanduay Gold to Danny Ildefonso.

Although the Beermen have yet to get a copy of the offer sheet (see related story) Uichicho told the INQUIRER that SMB won't let go of the reigning MVP.

The soft-spoken coach, author of four titles in five conferences for SMB, said he was "caught by surprise."

Uichicho told the INQUIRER: "Danny even practiced with us this morning. And the past week, we were working out

twice a day. I'm not sure if he'll show up tomorrow (today) anymore."

Uichicho added: "I don't see any reason why we reached this point. But I can't blame Danny for thinking about his future."

THE 27TH season of the PBA will start on Sunday with the staging of the All-Filipino Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

The lone game pits Sta. Lucia Realty against Alaska Milk at 6 p.m. after the opening ceremonies at 4 p.m.

He said the sheer length of the offer sheet readily guaranteed

Ildefonso's retirement plan because it would tie the 24-year-old with the team until he turns 40.

In league history, only one player—Robert Jaworski—was able to play way past 40.

Uichicho said he was shocked to hear the news "since we are almost ready to wrap up his new contract with San Miguel."

Said Uichicho: "I don't exactly know how to react. Maybe, it's something they didn't like or something they didn't get."

Ildefonso's manager, William Ong, offered his ward's services after SMB management reportedly flipped

flopped in the negotiations. Ong asked for 20 years, but Tanduay countered with 16.

Uichicho said SMB initially offered five years, with a maximum salary of P500,000, but it was whittled down to just two years.

Together, with the full force of SMB's roster, they won the 1999 Commissioner's and Governors Cups and duplicated it the following year, missing only two All-Filipino crowns to complete a grand slam.

"You are looking at a young, very talented championship team," said Uichicho. "It's a pity to see it go to waste just because of an offer sheet."

Agassi, Hingis, Capriati advance

MELBOURNE, Australia—Defending champion Andre Agassi wore down Patrick Rafter with his sharp shooting and rallied for a 7-5, 2-6, 6-7 (5), 6-2, 6-3 victory Thursday night to reach the Australian Open finals.

Rafter, the first Australian since 1996 to reach the semifinals of his home country's Grand Slam tournament, had taken the lead with his precision serving and acrobatic volleying.

Still, it was only one missed backhand by Agassi in the tiebreaker that decided the second set.

By late in the fourth set, the hard work had taken its toll on Rafter. He slowed noticeably, and called for the

trainer to massage his legs before the final set.

The match was reminiscent of the semi-final last year where Agassi rallied to beat Pete Sampras in five sets.

In the championship match Sunday,



CAPRIATI



HINGIS

final Saturday will be between three-time winner Martina Hingis and resurgent

Jennifer Capriati.

Hingis beat Venus Williams 6-1, 6-1—Williams' worst loss ever—and Capriati knocked out defending champion Lindsay Davenport 6-3, 6-4.

It was the first time Hingis had beaten both Williams sisters in the same tournament. It also was the first time that former troubled teenager Capriati had reached a Grand Slam final.

Agassi won the first set, thanks to an 11th-game break when Rafter double-faulted and then volleyed long. Rafter took control of the second by breaking in the fourth game with help from two drop shots and a double fault by Agassi.

12th Bill Shaw golfest stakes P2M

MORE than P2 million worth of tournament, raffle and hole-in-one prizes will be up for grabs in the 12th edition of the Bill Shaw Memorial Golf Classic, the annual member-guest invitation of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club starting today. Tee-off starts at 6:20 a.m.

The raffle prizes that will be given away in tomorrow's awarding alone are valued at no less than P750,000 topped by two Northwest tickets to any US destination, a dream vacation in Amanpulo and Omega watches.

A total of 158 teams made it to the registration deadline, all of which will

be playing one round each in the east and west courses of the biggest golf complex in Metro Manila.

Club president Ben Abalos, the former Mandaluyong Mayor and newly appointed MMDA chair, heads the cast together with the other members of the Wack Wack board and a merry mix of

club regulars, corporate executives and even top amateurs like Gerard Cantada and Marlon Dizon.

Tonichi Tuason and Bones Flores, chair and vice-chair, respectively, of the club's sports and games committee, said that solid corporate backing ensures the success of this year's Bill Shaw.

Cockers tourney at Big Dome

ANOTHER blockbuster derby will be held at the Araneta Coliseum on Jan. 29-31, with the staging of the NCA (National Cockers Association) 7-Cock Derby featuring the very best fighting cocks of the country's cockfighting luminaries.

Hosted by the Firely Group, Boy Jiao, Jun Cometa and Georgie Antonio, pulse-pounding three-cock matches kick off the event on Monday, Jan. 29, followed by the four-cock finals on Wednesday, Jan. 31. Submission of weights will be from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 28, at the coliseum green

gate. Eligible weights are from 1.9 to 2.450 kg. For details, call Dong Lamoste at 911-3101 loc. 8351, 8357 or 8307 an 911-2928.

Bannered the entry roster are Captain III of upcoming Alan Tan and Patrick Puno, solo winner of last Wednesday's NCA 7-Cock Derby with a score of 6-1/2 points; solo runner-up Thunderbird-Firely 8 of the Firefly Group (6 pts); Clear Cut-Jima Fer of Pampanga's famous Madlambayan and Jingco brothers, Geran of Gerry Fevidal, Momentum of Nilo Lizares and Boy Velez and Mulawin Argem Coliseum II

of engineer Pacifico Berin and Rudy Albano. Also in the fold are Danding Cojuangco, James Chiongban, Ito Yñares, Big Dome owner Nene Araneta, Alex Escalona, Eddie and Bomboy Araneta, Iking and Jimmyton Araneta, Jessie Viceo, Robert So, Blandy Tolentino, Tos Reyes, Jobo del Rosario, Vic Yu, John Capinpin, Johnny Jalandoni, Romy Pamamat, Jun Velasco, Romy Panganihan and Boy Lechon.

This is the third of 15 regular seven-cock series and two World Slasher 8-Cock Derbies that will decide the 2001 NCA Cocker of the Year.

POC head promises settlement to cage row

BY JONG ARCANO

MISINFORMED.

That was how Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit described members of the national basketball pool and referees who staged their own concept of the People Power on Wednesday at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, denouncing him and the newly-formed grand alliance of major leagues.

According to Dayrit, the issue regarding the formation of the super cage body led by Freddie Jalasco may not have been presented well enough to the supporters of the faction under Tiny Lital who insists that he's the legitimate president of the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

But instead of cracking the whip on the ralliers, Dayrit vowed to settle the issue via the diplomatic option.

He has put the POC investigative committee to task by setting a meeting between Lital and Jalasco at 5 p.m. today. Pending any resolution, however, Dayrit decided to maintain a status quo in the BAP, meaning the POC continues to recognize Jalasco.

The POC investigative committee headed by retired general and former POC president Rene Cruz will hear the sides of both Lital and Jalasco and will submit its recommendation to Dayrit and the POC board.

It's going to be a long day for Jalasco as he is also set to preside the first meeting of the super cage body which has drawn the support of the leaders of the PBA, MBA, PBL, UAAP and NCAA at 12 noon today in Greenhills.

St. Francis nears title

ST. FRANCIS of Assisi clipped lyceum of the Philippines, 75-68, to move within a win from the title yesterday in the 8th McDonald National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) men's basketball tournament at the Makati Coliseum.

The Doves rallied back from an 18-32 deficit in the early going after the Pirates were held scoreless in a span of five minutes.

Roy Billanes and Al Vergara led a 24-10 surge as the Doves suddenly found themselves ahead, 42-38, at halftime.

From then on, St. Francis never wavered on the way to the morale-boosting victory of Game 1 in the best-of-three championship series.

9-cock tilt on Jan. 30

THE HIGHLY anticipated Mandaluyong Coliseum International 9-Cock Derby unfolds from (Tuesday) Jan. 30 to Feb. 3.

More than 60 formidable entries are joining the event sponsored by Pagcor-Casino Filipino and Sagupaan Super Feeds.

Letting loose their tenacious bird warriors are reigning international derby champion Danding Cojuangco, Patrick Antonio, Butch Macasaet and Ucap Cocker of Year Jet Fernando.

The derby is hosted by businessman Vic Yu and held in cooperation with

Roligon derby

A WHOPPING P1 million in guaranteed cash prize is up for grabs when the biggest four-cock derby event gets underway on Feb. 17, 20, 22 and 24.

Dubbed as the P1M Super Karambola 4-Cock Derby, the four-day competition is the latest offering of Roligon general manager Lando S. Luzong.

Participants may choose to fight in any of the three separate elimination matches on Feb. 17, 20 and 22.

A P100,000 day money is at stake for each of the elimination matches for all entries that will score two points.

Meanwhile, the famed roosters of the late great game fowl breeder Mamie Lacson of Bacolod City are in for a challenge when Mamie's son Joey Lacson leads more than 50 entries to-night as Roligon Mega Cockpit's 11th Anniversary Derby resumes with 75 matches on tap.

Sports bill is discriminatory

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo



ON the average, the reconciled bill granting cash and other non-monetary benefits and incentives to outstanding national athletes, coaches and trainers is a bit of good news. Still, there are flaws, leaving some feeling queasy. One blatant blotch: the bill is discriminatory.

Why? Because there is a very serious oversight, a glaring example of unequal treatment in the way sporting heroes are rewarded like achievers in non-Olympics sports such as world billiards champion Efren "Bata" Reyes and four-time Bowling World Cup winner Paeng Nepomuceno.

Under the provision of the bill, entitled to cash rewards and/or incentives are national athletes who have

brought honor and recognition to the country by winning in international competitions which are sanctioned by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) or held every four years. In effect, both Reyes and Nepomuceno, whose events are not in the Olympic calendar and held annually, do not qualify for the rewards.

That would be most unfair to both Reyes and Nepomuceno because they have left large footprints on the international sports scene with their extraordinary exploits. As a matter of fact, they are better known around the world than the congressmen who authored the sports incentives bill.

A well-earned victory in a world level tournament of non-Olympic sports should be recognized equally like an Olympic gold. It is not the fault of the athlete that his sport is not included in the Olympic calendar; the achievement does not become easier simply because his sport is not in the Olympics.

Who will dare say that the stirring victories of Tiger Woods is less rated

because golf is held only annually and that golf is a non-Olympic sport?

Reyes and Nepomuceno deserve a better deal from the government of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. I have said it before and repeating it now: Reyes and Nepomuceno are true champions worthy of emulation and should be treated more kindly. Their victories are easily at par with any Olympic gold medal winners.

Thus, I am appealing to Ms Macapagal to correct the mistake in the landmark measure before she signs it into law. It is the best thing her government can bestow upon Reyes and Nepomuceno and the other athletes as well. There should be no discrimination in sports.

Birkenstock
World-Class Sandals



San Juan MCC champ

DENNIS San Juan drew his seventh and final round to win the January edition of the Metropolitan Chess Club. San Juan, ranked No. 5, agreed to a 10-move draw against Macapagal Pagutal to earn points after seven rounds of play. He pocketed P3,000. The next MCC event is on Feb. 4.

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

TENNIS: Australian Open, Men's Semifinals at 12 noon - 5 p.m. (r - 5 p.m. - 10:30 a.m.) on Sky Cable 17

BASKETBALL: US NCAA - N.C. State Wolfpack vs Florida State Seminoles at 8 a.m., De Paul Blue Demons vs South Florida Bulls at 10 a.m. (r - tomorrow at 3:30 a.m.), Illinois Fighting Illini vs Michigan Wolverines at 1 p.m. (d) on ESPN

NBA - Portland Trailblazers vs Indiana Pacers at 9 a.m. (r - 9 p.m.), San Antonio Spurs vs Sacramento Kings at 11:30 a.m. (r - 11:30 p.m.) on Star Sports

GOLF: Inside the PGA Tour at 2 p.m. (r - 8 p.m.) on Star Sports

LPGA Arch Wireless Championship, Final Round at 2:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

PGA Gte Byron Nelson Classic Highlights at 6 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

LPGA Com Classic, Final Day at 4:30 p.m. on ESPN

GYMNASTICS: Super 6 Kickoff at 9:30 p.m. on ESPN

U.E. BASKETBALL TRYOUTS

University of the East
(Men's Basketball Team)

Will be holding tryouts from January 22 to January 28, 2001, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

At the Tanduay Gym #499 Carlos Palanca Avenue, Qulapo, Manila

Protests hit Pinoy Games

BY JUNE NAVARRO

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—A deluge of protests plagued the fourth day of competitions but a diminutive sprinter from Laguna somehow blotted out the stain smeared by the age-old iniquity of cheating in the Philippine National Youth Games-Batang Pinoy Championships at the San Luis RECS Village here.

Sprinter Aiza Cometa brushed aside her size disability as the 12-year-old daughter of Liliw, Laguna, stormed past her rivals in the 200-meter dash, a fitting follow-up to her gold winning effort in the century dash on Wednesday.

A fan of Lydia de Vega-Mercado, once Asia's fastest woman, Cometa broke the tape in a whirlwind finish, clocking 27.1 seconds to get the better of Leyte's Joba Botana (27.9) and Capiz's Angie Onasin (28.8).

"This is a good sign. I hope it would continue on my succeeding events," said Cometa in Tagalog. She is heavily favored to win the 400-meter run and anchor her team in the 400 x 1 and 400 x 4 relays today.

Indeed, it was a good premonition for Cometa but not for some athletes in football, swimming and gymnastics, who are facing charges of age violations.

Football tournament director Edward Magallona noted the physical maturity of the Tawi-tawi booters but "we cannot just bar them from playing since their documents appear to be in order."

Tawi-tawi delegation head Nurbert Sajali said his team would respect the PSC's decision.

A gymnast from Sultan Kudarat was also under close scrutiny after opposing teams noted the startling disparity in her physique.

The Batang Pinoy jury committee, headed by Danny Lopez, promised to come down hard on the coaches, who will be prohibited from all Philippine Sports Commission-sanctioned affairs if found guilty as charged.

Commissioner William Ramirez, overall director of the meet, said athletes could be disqualified on the basis of their physical appearances and questionable

upscale performances.

"Due to the limited time to investigate the offenders, we ought to make a decision at once to protect not only the image of the Games but also the interest of the athletes," said Ramirez.

But the penalty will be carried out until after the jury committee finds substantial evidence, which can only be attested by the athletes' birth certificates.

In swimming, Lambert Guiriba of Manila eclipsed the resurgence of Laguna and Iloilo in the pool as he dazzled the crowd with his record-shattering feats to become the meet's first triple gold medalist.

Guiriba, captured the gold after smashing the two-year-old record in the 11-12 years old boys' 100-meter freestyle and 100-meter

butterfly. He erased the old marks of Cavite's James Guinto in freestyle (1:00.94) and butterfly (1:07.95).

Iloilo and Laguna, which won a lone gold in the pool Wednesday, snared five gold each while Manila deposited four more golds into its account.

Bea Del Mundo topped the girls' 7-8 100-m freestyle and 50-m breaststroke, Doreen Peronilla (11-12 girls' 50-m breaststroke), Thomas Measures (7-8 boys' 50-m breaststroke) and Kristine Cabasac (11-12 girls' 100-m butterfly).

Erika Visitation of Las Piñas ruled the 7-8 girls' 50-m breaststroke in 46.13 seconds to beat Denjylie Cordera of Dagupan (46.54) and Manila's Edlyn Son (46.79).

Earlier, Nasser Nayao and Roel Torres

struck two golds for Maguindanao after prevailing in the boys' 200-m dash and boys' 1,500-m dash, respectively.

Nayao reversed the tide against Albay's Tyrone Ng, who beat him in the century dash the other day.

Camarines Sur, which topped athletics during the meet's initial staging in Bacolod, got its share of the limelight following successive triumphs by Jeanziel Querubin (girls' 1,500-m run) and Gerlie Gumba (girls' high jump).

In cycling, Stephen Rome Romaquin won his second gold medal in the 10-12 10-km road race with a time of 16:10.40 to subdue hometown bet Dennis Jared Pajarillo (18:31.98) and teammate Mark Anthony Banilit (18:53.68).



COMETA: Second gold. ROMY HOMILLADA

Shaq fined over lakeside home improvements

WINDERMERE, Florida—Shaquille O'Neal can create space under the basket. Creating a beach at his \$5-million lakeside home is not so easy—and it cost him in fines and other penalties from county officials.

The Los Angeles Lakers' star center cleared about a quarter of his 400-foot (120-meter) frontage on Lake Butler last year and filled in the area with white sand.

However, he cleared about twice the length of lakefront allowed and some of the sand put down was below the high-water mark.

Those are code violations without the proper permits, said Bruce Eastman, a manager at Orange County's Environmental Protection Division.

"In the grand scheme of things, these are rather minor violations," Eastman said.

O'Neal was fined \$236 in administrative fees, told to remove most of the sand and replant about 50 feet (15 meters) of the beachfront with at least 3,000 native plants and grasses.

O'Neal has already paid the fee and begun the fix-up.

"He's been extremely cooperative," Eastman said. "I wish all of our cases were this easy."

O'Neal lives in the gated community of Isleworth, Orlando's most exclusive neighborhood. Among his neighbors are golf great Tiger Woods, NBA stars Tracy McGrady and Penny Hardaway, baseball star Ken Griffey Jr. and actor Wesley Snipes.

Complete results: Cleveland 94, Chicago 86; Phoenix 106, Detroit 73; Miami 103, Toronto 83; Charlotte 81, New York 67; Philadelphia 85, Houston 84, OT; Golden State 109, New Jersey 87; Seattle 114, L.A. Clippers 110, OT. AP



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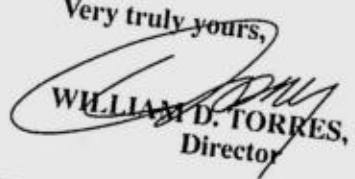
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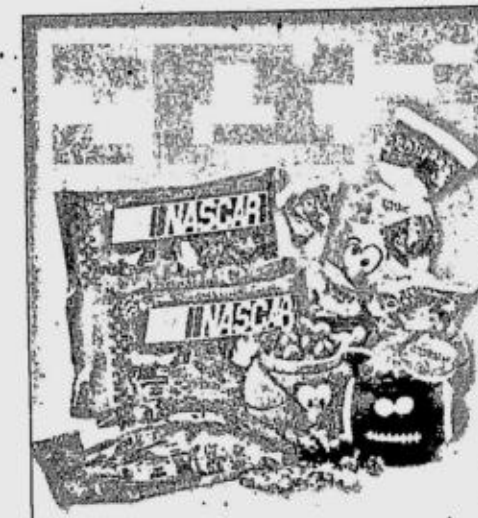
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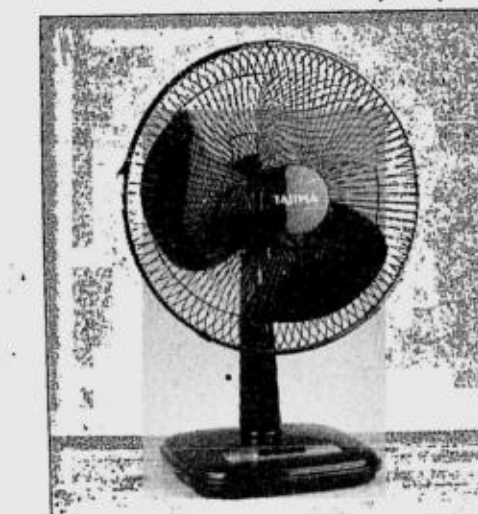
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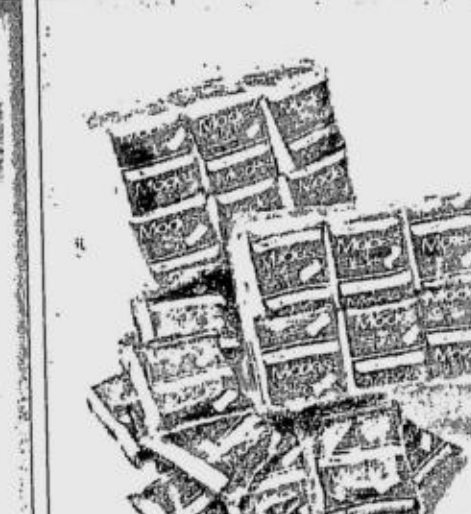
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Bare Eye: Nobel Peace Prize for the Pinoy A22

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Salamat, 6 others ordered arrested A22

Showbiz stars protests 'recycled, discarded pols' in GMA Cabinet

BY LEAH SALTERIO

A GROUP of entertainers yesterday protested President Macapagal's appointment of what they described as "recycled, if not discredited politicians" to the Cabinet.

In a news conference at the Republic of Malate bar and restaurant in Malate, the group, which calls itself Artista Para sa Pagbabago, expressed fears of "a creeping trapo-ism" in the new government.

"There are a lot of *trapos* who are being appointed and we feel that they have been ineffective before, so they don't have a place in the new administration," said singer Kuh Ledesma, one of the organizers of the group.

"Save for a few exceptions, most of the names and faces appointed to your new Cabinet have been the nominees of political parties and of old-time, recycled, if not discredited politicians," the group

said in a statement addressed to the new President.

The group of artists, however, refused to identify the people they are referring to.

"We don't want to be partisan," Ledesma said. "If we name names, we might as well also name those who are worthy of their position."

Artista Para sa Pagbabago was formed three months ago following reports that former President Joseph Estrada had amassed billions of pesos in ill-gotten wealth.

Artista is an off-shoot of the multi-sectoral group, Pagbabago at Pilipinas, earlier formed by film director Joey Reyes. Pagbabago also includes lawyers, businessmen, journalists and politicians who want change for the country.

The other members of Artista include Apo Hiking Society's Jim Paredes, TV hosts Tessie Tomas, Apa Ongpin and Anthony Pangilinan, theater director Bart Guingona and singer Leah Navarro, among others.

The group believes Arroyo owes no political favors to anyone after the historic Edsa People Power 2, which unseated Estrada.

"Immediately after your oath-taking, in virtually every event you have attended," said the group's statement to the new President, "we see the specter of old, traditional politics slithering around you striking fear into our hearts, shaking our budding confidence and dampening the joy of victory that should have lasted, at the very least, one season."

"We took to heart your promise of new politics, the return of decency and ethical standards in leadership and governance, the restoration of honor and pride to our devastated national soul."

Ledesma said the new government should have young, vibrant, dynamic and honest people.

"It's not good to show the youth after Edsa that we are going back to the old ways, that if you have the right connection to the president, you can be appointed to a very good position in the government."

"Now is the time to tell people that you are worthy of a position before it is handed to you," she added.



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Maricel brother accused of rape

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

A 15-YEAR-OLD housemaid accused a brother of movie actress Maricel Soriano of rape in Quezon City.

The girl, a native of Albay, told police that Victor Soriano, of Fordham Street, Barangay White Plains in Quezon City, beat her up and then sexually abused her inside his home in the afternoon of Jan. 21, said investigator SPO4 Willy Quilang of the Project 4 police station.

The first time she talked to police, the girl reported that Soriano only beat her up and locked her inside the maid's quarters after her employer, Victoria, a sister of the actress, accused her of stealing jewelry worth P100,000.

She told police she escaped only after the other maids in the household helped her. She reported the rape only after she talked to a female member of the Women's and Children's Desk, said Quilang. The girl said she did not tell police about the rape earlier because all the investigators she encountered were men.

She said she had also been in and out of the hospital as a result of the beating. Results of a medico-legal exam on the girl showed she was no longer a virgin, said Quilang.

The girl told police that Victoria accused her of stealing the jewelry

NGOs throw out MMDA plan to dump in Quezon province

DELFIN T. MALLARI JR.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

A COALITION of non-government organizations in Quezon province has denounced what it called the "incessant scheming" of Metro Manila officials to dump garbage from the metropolis in the province.

The Kapatiran at Alyansang Alay para sa Kaunlaran ng Bayan, or Kaakbay-Quezon, yesterday issued a statement of protest after the new chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), Benjamin Abalos, announced that negotiations were underway on the MMDA's use of a dump in Agdangan, Quezon.

Agdangan is a coastal town at the mouth of Tayabas Bay and is near the rebel-infested Bondoc Peninsula. It is just two towns away from Lucena City, the provincial capital.

Abalos said the Quezon site could be used not only as a temporary dump but as a permanent landfill.

"What is good about this dumpsite is that it already has an environmental compliance certificate (ECC), so we would not have to deal with the problem, just in case," he said.

He described the site as "somewhat uninhabited," being in a mountainous part of the province.

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order stopping the MMDA from dumping Metro Manila garbage in the San Mateo Sanitary Landfill in Rizal province.

But the group Kaakbay-Quezon said the

MMDA plan was unwelcome, illegal and would pose a serious threat to the already fragile environmental situation in the province.

"Why can't they just dump their trash in their own backyard?" Fr. Raul Enriquez, chair of Kaakbay-Quezon, said in a news conference in Lucena City in Quezon yesterday. "Quezon province is not the Payatas or Smokey Mountain of Metro Manila."

"In any mode that they can possibly resort to, whether it's by sea, land or by train, the people of Quezon will surely block the garbage, just like the successful opposition displayed by the people in Semirara," he said.

He was referring to the protest actions by local groups in Antique to stop the MMDA plan to bring Metro Manila's garbage to Semirara Island in that province. The Antique groups were able to secure a TRO against the use of Semirara.

Quezon board member Claro Talaga said the MMDA plan would also meet stiff opposition "from the legal point of view."

Talaga, chair of the provincial committee on environment and natural resources, said that his group recently discovered 19 10-wheeler trucks dumping garbage from Pasay City in Lucban, Quezon.

In Manila, Abalos promised that a consultation with the people of Agdangan would be held before any decision would be taken on the use of the Quezon site.

Abalos said that if the plan would be approved by Agdangan residents, he would ask Caloocan

NGOS/A22

Binondo police chief beaten, robbed

BY JEROME ANING

TWO Filipino-Chinese are now behind bars for allegedly assaulting and disarming the police station commander of Binondo, Manila during a traffic altercation on Wednesday.

Jonathan Go, 33, of Camarines Street, Sta. Cruz; and his cousin James Ongsiaco, 31, of Juan Luna Street, Tondo, surrendered to the Malabon police Wednesday night and were turned over to the Western Police District.

Go and Ongsiaco will be charged with assault on a person of authority, usurpation of authority, robbery with physical injury, grave threats and violation of a city ordinance that prohibits riding a motorcycle in tandem and without helmets.

Supt. Juanito de Guzman, 52, commander of WPD Station 11 in Binondo, suffered swollen lips and bruises on the right arm and back when he fought off the cousins.

The duo also took his 9mm service pistol. The WPD's general assignments division said De Guzman and his wife Luz, 43, were on board their Honda Civic and were bound for the Manila Medical Center on United Nations Avenue for a checkup.

De Guzman said that at about 5:30 p.m. on General Luna Street in Ermita, he used his car's siren to prod a slow-moving van in front to give way.

But the two cousins, who were on board a black scooter, thought the siren was meant for them and were enraged. De Guzman said Go and Ongsiaco began arguing with him.

De Guzman, who was wearing his complete uniform, said he identified himself as a policeman. But the two men also introduced themselves as policemen, he said.

He said he asked them where they were assigned but they continued arguing with him. He said that as he went back to his car to get his gun, the two men followed him. One grabbed De Guzman's gun and aimed it at him while the other punched him, he said.

The duo then fled towards Taft Avenue with De Guzman's gun.



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DEC. 30 BLASTS Salamat, 6 others ordered arrested

BY VOLT CONTRERAS

A QUEZON City court has issued warrants of arrest for Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) chair Salamat Hashim and five other members of the rebel group for the Rizal day bombings in Metro Manila.

Ordered arrested for murder and frustrated multiple murder are Hashim, MILF vice chairs Ghazali Jaafar, Al-haj Murad, and Aleem Aziz Mimbantas; and special operations agents Safilla Unos, Mohammed Guindolangan, and Ismael Climaco Abbas.

Director General Panfilo Lacson, then chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP), had blamed the MILF for the five bomb explosions that killed 18 people, including two policemen, and injured about 90 others on Dec. 30, 2000.

Judge Teresa Yadao of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 81 on Monday issued six arrest warrants in connection with the Edsan Bus blast that

killed a man and injured 17 others in Cubao, Quezon City.

Only Abbas is in police custody. Yadao allowed no bail for the murder charge but granted a P200,000 bail for each of the suspects for the frustrated multiple murder charge.

Apart from the Cubao explosion, bombs also exploded within minutes of each other at a Light Rail Transit station, at Plaza Ferguson in front of the US Embassy, in an abandoned Petron gas station in Makati City, and at the parking area of the Centennial Air cargo terminal at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Militant groups and political oppositionists were initially accused of responsibility for the killer bombings, which were also linked to the then ongoing impeachment trial of ousted President Estrada.

But the PNP under Lacson pinned the blame on the MILF after claiming that it traced the origin of the "car bomb" used in the airport blast to the separatist group.

2 dead in road accidents

A 37-YEAR-OLD man and a 3-year-old boy were killed Wednesday night in separate vehicular accidents in Quezon City.

Ryan Arellano, 3, of BMA Street in Barangay Tatalon, Quezon City, and Leo P. Llanto, 37, of ROTC Hunters, also in Barangay Tatalon, did not make it to the hospital alive after the two accidents, which happened an hour apart, police said.

Arellano was crossing Quezon Avenue with his mother Anita when a maroon Honda Civic (WDN-569) driven by a 17-year-old student from Sto. Cristo, Binondo, Manila, hit them both, said investigator SPO2 Josefine Cuato.

Mrs. Arellano survived, Cuato added.

Mother and child crossed the major thoroughfare near Biak-na-Bato in front of Scott Burger about 8:15 p.m.

Wednesday.

They were brought to the National Orthopedic Hospital where the boy was declared dead on arrival. Mrs. Arellano is still recovering in the hospital as of yesterday afternoon, Cuato said.

The young driver of the car surrendered to the police, Cuato added.

An hour later, Llanto was killed while crossing Araneta Avenue after an Isuzu delivery truck, driven by Jaime C. Illescas, 47, of Pasong Bangkal, San Rafael, Bulacan, hit him about 9:15 p.m., said PO2 Perito Datu.

The left side of the truck hit Llanto who was brought to the Philippine Orthopedic Hospital where he was declared dead on arrival, Datu said.

Police later arrested Illescas, and charged him with reckless imprudence resulting in homicide. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Nobel Peace Prize for the Pinoy

IT WAS suggested that the Filipino should get the Nobel Peace Prize for this year.

You're free to nod or squirm. Truth is, even before they could prepare a draft of the nomination, the victory party has predictably been spoiled by the credit-grabbers.

Look, the senators have already closed the proceedings and written finish to the Estrada impeachment telenovela.

But the fight over the spoils of victory, pardon my saying it, has just started.

In fact, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had to explain that the assignments have yet to be completed.

Which simply meant that other 'visible' People Power 2 players, who have milled around Malacañang like restive, unforgiving bill collectors, should wait for their turn. *Hindi po kayo maubusan (sana).*

From what I have been told, one top Edsa '2 player from Mandaluyong, my home city, blew his top when he learned that one of his political foes, lawyer Tony Bernardo, managed to grab a juicy post in the executive secretary's office well ahead of him.

The dusky, golf-playing protestor felt insulted. But, true enough, he was promptly awarded a big position which, with its inborn problems,

BARE
EYE

Recah
Trinidad



could not be taken as payment for all the expenses and efforts he had contributed for the swift ouster of the hated ex-President.

With the scramble for the spoils of Edsa 2 expected to mount, crucial questions continued to be asked.

Is Gen. Angelo Reyes, Armed Forces chief of staff, for example, as big a hero as he had loomed during last Friday's climax of successful people's uprising at Edsa? Or did he finally give in because he had been forced into a dead end?

What about Orly Mercado, who openly expressed displeasure after ex-President Fidel Ramos made that dramatic walk from the airport to the Edsa Shrine? Does he deserve the congratulations and the thanks?

Whose story should we believe? Was it true that the presidency was first offered to Chief Justice Hilario Davide, definitely a more popular choice, who characteristi-

cally turned it down and opted for what's constitutional?

You need not be an expert on the workings of Philippine politics to conclude that, despite the attendant glitter and hysteria, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's enthronement at Malacañang is not exactly a heartwarming fairy tale.

The national scene will never run out of power players and the new President will have to fight real hard to prevent the golden coach from turning into a pumpkin.

Truth is, while the President is left to do a balancing act, the world has once again looked at the poor, battered Filipino with kinder, loving eyes.

Out there in Florida, Jeboy Maralit, a successful physical therapist, had a hard time explaining to disbelieving co-workers, friends and neighbors that the multitude that repeatedly swirled like a maelstrom last week at Edsa was actually staging a revolt.

How come everybody was singing and dancing? Jeboy was asked.

That's the way we Filipinos get rid of corrupt, incompetent presidents, he answered with a smile.

The only one of its kind in the world, it was bloodless and glorious, Jeboy's father, Marcelino Maralit of Lipa City, explained with visible amusement.

Mr. Maralit, popularly known as

Ka Udo, therefore claimed that the Filipino should readily qualify for the Nobel Peace Prize.

That nomination, made before chirping vesper birds, quiet scent of burning leaves, silvery sunlight in a breezy, tree-lined backyard in Barangay Pangao, Lipa on Wednesday, could have, in a way, been seconded by no less than the New York Times.

In an editorial on the happy, history events in Manila, the Times wrote: "The people of the Philippines, twice in the past 15 years, have courageously taken to the streets to turn out failed leaders...With wise leadership, the Philippines, with a favorable geographical location, charter membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and historic ties to the United States, could again become an economic leader in Southeast Asia. It could also become a positive example to its less democratic neighbors, like Vietnam and Myanmar."

Take a bow, please.

But, hey, more than world-wide applause, congratulations and a Nobel Peace Prize nomination, we all have to agree that what the Filipino urgently deserves are good, honest governance and a better life.

Nothing more, nothing less.

Robbers kill two taxi drivers in Quezon City

TWO groups robbed and killed two taxi drivers in Quezon City Tuesday night and Sunday.

One victim, Edwin F. Nidua, tried to run and ask for help from bystanders even after he had been stabbed several times. But he did not get far before he slumped on

the pavement and died Tuesday night.

Nidua, of Purok 4-A Quezon Avenue, Culiat, Quezon City, was killed by two unidentified men who robbed and stabbed him, said investigator SPO1 Salvador Buenviaje.

Nidua was driving his

LED taxi when the two men announced the holdup at 11 p.m. at the corner of Bulusan Road and Calamba.

Nidua stopped his taxi and surrendered his day's earnings, But the suspects were not satisfied with just getting his money. They stabbed him several times before they escaped toward Retiro Avenue, Buenviaje said.

Another driver, Jomar D. Villareal, 30, of San Ildefonso, Bulacan, was found dead by a pedestrian near his abandoned Archery taxi on Quezon Avenue about 11:45 p.m. on Sunday, said Kamuning police station desk officer Edmund Senido.

Villareal had been stabbed in the chest and shoulder, Senido said.

Police said the taxi driver must have been robbed and left for dead by his assailants. But the pedestrian who found him still brought him to the Capitol Medical Center where he was declared dead on arrival.

Also in Quezon City, Mark Fuente, 18, was left in critical condition after a street gang stabbed and beat him up in front of the City Hall.

Fuente, of San Francisco Del Monte, Quezon City, was waiting for a ride home in front of City Hall about 9 p.m. Sunday when a group of unidentified youngsters ganged up on him, Senido said.

Without any warning, the group suddenly began beating up Fuente, Senido said. During the rumble, one of the group members pulled out a fan knife and stabbed Fuente in the back, Senido said.

Philip C. Tubeza

1 Mike goes to housing, another set to take QC

WHEN Rep. Mike Defensor accepted the offer of President Macapagal to head the housing portfolio in her Cabinet, he created a vacuum in the congressional seat for Quezon City's third district.

But Quezon City Councilor Mike Planas has decided to step in and warm the seat of his outgoing namesake.

Defensor, who was expected to seek reelection in May before his Cabinet appointment, welcomed the other Mike's plans to run as representative of Quezon City's third district.

Planas is a two-term Quezon City councilor who first won in 1995, the only candidate in Defensor's ticket to occupy a seat in the council.

The two Mikes, both prime movers in Quezon City's political scene, are known to be good friends. Both are young, agile and came from the University of the Philippines.

Defensor served for one term



PLANAS

as city councilor and is now on his second term as congressman. Planas, who is now serving his second term as councilor, took courses at the American University in Washington, DC.

Both are also working on reconciling the Lakas and LDP parties.

Group wants Lim, Atienza out

A MULTI-SECTORAL group yesterday called on the administration to field a strong slate in Manila against the tickets of incumbent Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and former DILG Secretary Alfredo Lim, who it said are known die-hard supporters of ousted President Estrada.

Pangkat Bagong Maynila (PBM) also praised on-going efforts said to be spearheaded by former Manila Mayor Mel Lopez, city chair of the Lakas NUCD-Kampi Party, to unify all sectors supportive of the administration of newly installed President Macapagal.

PBM, an umbrella organization of non-government organizations, youth, civic and religious groups, noted that both Lim and Atienza are

no longer acceptable to Manilans because of their fanatical support for Estrada even during the critical moments of Edsa People Power II.

The crowd at Edsa Shrine booed Lim, when he joined the protesters in the evening of Jan. 20 when it became clear that Estrada would be booted out of office.

PBM movers also called on Manilans to reject Lim for hanging on to the Estrada administration up to the last minute. They said that even former President Corason Aquino did not greet Lim when he went to Edsa.

The PBM and the Kangkong Brigade Manila chapter asked Lopez to take a stand because Manila might again fall in the hands of Estrada partisans.

NGOs throw out...

(From page A21)

City Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo to allow the construction of a garbage transfer station near the Philippine National Railway tracks since the waste would be brought to Agdangan by train.

He said that aside from being cheaper and efficient, the use of the train would stimulate trade and commerce between Metro Manila and Southern Luzon.

People in Antique yesterday asked Ombudsman Aniano Desierto to initiate criminal proceedings against former Plagship Projects Secretary Roberto Aventajado, former MMDA chair Jejomar Binay and officials of two private firms for their alleged complicity in

trying to turn Semirara Island into Metro Manila's dumpsite.

In an eight-page complaint, the Antiquenos led by Gideon L. Javier, the son of slain Antique governor Evelio Javier accused Aventajado, Binay and the others of graft and violation of Republic Act No. 7586.

The other accused were Isidro Conunji, president of DM Conunji Inc., and Leopoldo Sanchez, president of RII Builders Inc. Both firms earlier secured a P1.4-billion contract for the two-year MMDA's interim integrated waste development project. With reports from Agnes E. Donato, Michael Lim Ubac and Nelson F. Flores

Maricel brother...

(From page A21)

in her house in St. Ignatius in Quezon City in the morning of Jan. 21 and interrogated her up to about 3 p.m.

She said that when she would not admit the theft, Victoria called her brother Victor, who brought her to his house in White Plains.

Quilang said the girl told police that Soriano poked a gun at her and handcuffed her. But the girl still denied stealing the jewelry, police said.

That was when Soriano beat her up, the girl said.

She lost consciousness because of the beatings, the girl said. When she woke up, Soriano was getting off her and zipping his fly, she said.

Quilang said the girl complained about bruises on different parts of her body and pain in her private parts.

But police are having a difficult time investigating the case because Soriano has been avoiding authorities, Quilang said.

Quilang said police had already gone to Soriano's house thrice, but no one was home. He said it would be better if Soriano showed up at the police station to give his side of the story.

Reunion

CLASS '51 of Araullo High School, headed by its president, Felisa Gabriel Rodriguez, will celebrate its golden jubilee during the grand reunion of the Araullo High School Alumni Association Inc. starting at 12 noon on Saturday, Feb. 17, in the school library.

Class '51 consisted of 271 graduates and yielded outstanding achievers in the government and the private sector. They were the first graduates after World War II who completed four years of study at Araullo under an American school principal, James P. Burns.

Class members may contact Lourdes Boncales Garcia, 825-9353; Yoli Canseco Hernandez, 9392115; Ely Gabriel Rodriguez, 825-3983; Tess Bernal Geli, 843-2432; Paciencia Pilar Cuyugan, 5634179; and Carmen Rosales Ibita, 561-0048.

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'Millionaire's' first season evaluated

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

THE LOCAL version of the popular game show, "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" has completed its first season. How's it doing so far?

Well, nobody has won the top prize of P1 million, although Alfredo Pilli got P400,000, Dexter Doria won P300,000, and P100,000 winners include Mark Carlos, Ma. Catherine Milarion, Michael Rivera, Ma. Marissa Cortez and Ma. Socorro Lumayno.

The hope is that the show's second season will finally come up with a really big winner. P400,000 may sound like a lot of money, but on our nighttime shows, people regularly win hundreds of thousands of pesos, so "Millionaire" needs a million-peso winner to make it truly special.

How is it faring in other aspects? Viewers like its high-tech sets and lights, but a number of people feel that its questions—and the sequence in which they are asked—need further improvement.

Some "easy" questions are actually quite tough, while a few questions worth many thousands of pesos are relative giveaways. Who decides on the "rising sequence" in which these questions are asked?

Perhaps the show's producers can review tapes of the first season's shows to see where the program has gone wrong in this regard, and how this problem can be corrected.

We get the feeling, too, that the show's questions presume that contestants know "everything about everything," which is a requirement impossible to live up to.

Perhaps a way can be found to limit the range of questions, so that a contestant doesn't need to know everything from aardvarks to zwitterions to finally win that P1M top prize!

Finally, some viewers are thrown off by Christopher de Leon's hosting style. The actor seems to be acting like a game show host, instead of being one. Some of his "pa-suspense" tricks rattle the contestants. And he lacks the genuine hosting verve and charisma that game shows need.

We hope that De Leon will do better on the program's second season. Above all, we trust that the game show will finally live up to its title and come up with its first million-peso winner in the next three months.

("Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" airs on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8 p.m. over IBC-13).

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2 LITTLE NICKY	2 WHIPPED	2 DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR?	2 LITTLE NICKY
3 WHIPPED	3 THE RED PLANET	3 BOOBA	3 THE RED PLANET
4 HIGHLANDER	4 AMERICAN PSYCHO (Phil. Premiere)	4 SOON TO OPEN Onstage	4 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
			5 BOOBA

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MOVIE GUIDE

Filinvest	GOLFSKO CINEMA	CINEMA 280
1 (DOLBY) BOOBA	1 (DOLBY) BOOBA	1 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA	2 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA	2 (DOLBY) MALIKOT ANG AGOS
3 (DOLBY) MALIKOT ANG AGOS	3 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER	3 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS
4 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER	4 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS	4 (DOLBY) DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
5 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS	5 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS	5 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
6 (DOLBY) WHIPPED	6 (DOLBY) WHIPPED	6 (DOLBY) LITTLE NICKY
7 (DOLBY) DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR?	7 (DOLBY) DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO	7 (DOLBY) SUPER IDOL
8 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA	8 (DOLBY) DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO	8 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER
9 (DOLBY) THE 6TH DAY	9 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER	9 (DOLBY) MALIKOT ANG AGOS
		10 (DOLBY) BOOBA
		11 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS
		12 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
		13 (DOLBY) WHIPPED
		14 (DOLBY) DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR?
		15 (DOLBY) LITTLE NICKY
		16 (DOLBY) TANGING YAMAN
		17 (DOLBY) MEET THE PARENTS
		18 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS
		19 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
		20 (DOLBY) MALIKOT ANG AGOS
		21 (DOLBY) BOOBA
		22 (DOLBY) THE 6TH DAY
		23 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER
		24 (DOLBY) WHIPPED
		25 (DOLBY) DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR?
		26 (DOLBY) LITTLE NICKY
		27 (DOLBY) TANGING YAMAN
		28 (DOLBY) MEET THE PARENTS
		29 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS
		30 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
		31 (DOLBY) MALIKOT ANG AGOS
		32 (DOLBY) BOOBA
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		40 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS
		41 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
		42 (DOLBY) MALIKOT ANG AGOS
		43 (DOLBY) BOOBA
		44 (DOLBY) THE 6TH DAY
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		46 (DOLBY) WHIPPED
		47 (DOLBY) DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR?
		48 (DOLBY) LITTLE NICKY
		49 (DOLBY) TANGING YAMAN
		50 (DOLBY) MEET THE PARENTS
		51 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS
		52 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
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		62 (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS
		63 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
		64 (DOLBY) MALIKOT ANG AGOS
		65 (DOLBY) BOOBA
		66 (DOLBY) THE 6TH DAY
		67 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER
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Kenny Rogers food chain uses music to promote goodwill

COMPOSER Mon del Rosario is beaming with pride these days. The musical competition "Musika," of which he is the music consultant, is on its second year.

Del Rosario points out that when "Musika" was launched last year by Kenny Rogers Roasters, it was really meant to be an annual music competition among students from different schools.

Last year, the competition involved 74 schools, with more than 200 entries. This year, "Musika" attracted nearly 500 entries from 168 schools.

According to Kenny Rogers Roasters marketing manager Vic Gregorio, "Musika" came about last year when the food chain was thinking of starting a project that would have a positive impact on the youth.

"The contest is also meant to project the restaurant's goodwill," Gregorio says. "It's our way of giving back to the community for supporting and patronizing us."

The project has earned the support of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports.

"It's the only music contest that

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

enhances the talent and education of students," Del Rosario says.

This year's contest is more refined in terms of musical styles and judging procedures, compared to the first "Musika." The competition has been categorized; like, the vocals will be divided into Broadway, pop and classical categories.

In the solo vocal performance category, the first prize winner will get a six-month music scholarship, P10,000 in cash, an audio system and a trophy. The second prize winner will get a three-month music scholarship, P5,000 in cash, an audio system and a trophy.

In the songwriting category, winners will also receive audio systems and trophies. First prize gets a four-year college music scholarship plus

P10,000 in cash; second prize, a six-month music scholarship and P7,500 in cash; third prize, a three-month music scholarship and P5,000 in cash.

The awards will be given out tonight at the AFP Theater in Camp Aguinaldo. The show will be hosted by JM Rodriguez and Isay Alvarez.

This year's judges are composers Trina Belamide, Ryan Cayabyab and Jimmy Apatiporda in the

songwriting category; Ramon Acoymo, tenor Noly Cabahug and violinist John Lesaca, solo vocal classical; singer-stage actors Robert Seña and Audie Gemora, Broadway; and composers Louie Ocampo, Nonoy Tan and Nonong Pedero, pop.

"This contest is our link with our owner (singer Kenny Rogers)," says Gregorio. "Our dream is to make music identified with Kenny Rogers, like sports is with Milo."

Clarification

ANDY Requentina, PR manager of Philippine Pizza Inc., franchise holder of Pizza Hut, wrote to clarify that the restaurant chain is not owned by Sen. Juan Ponce-Enrile, contrary to what is being circulated in text messages.

"Pizza Hut wishes to congratulate you on your article regarding the role of text messaging in the recent People Power 2 (Metro, Jan.

22, 2001).

"In response to the text messages urging the boycott of Pizza Hut, we wish to inform the public that Pizza Hut's 86 restaurants in the country are operated by Philippine Pizza Inc., a company owned by Progressive Development Corp., a member of the Araneta Group which acquired the franchise for Pizza Hut in 1984.

"We urge the public to support responsible text messaging."

The grief... (From page A26)

meters away without the benefit of the shield of bulletproof glass or a steel-reinforced roof. Only my mom's faithful Presidential Security Group served as our saviors.

I was bodily dragged out of bed and down spiral stairs, in my nightgown and barefoot, at dawn by my mom who suddenly had superhuman strength. The fighting wore on while we prayed countless rosaries during the morning hours.

I was there when my mom's main concern was that my dad's handwritten prison diaries be turned over to San Bida's Fr. Bobby Perez to ensure their safekeeping for the sake of history's archives. I witnessed when she stood her ground regardless of the impassioned entreaties to move us to a safer place, and declared she would not leave Arlegui and later Malacañang regardless of the perceived strength of the rebels.

We are alive today because of the loyalty and fortitude of the PSG under then Col. Volts Gazmin.

I understand the vulnerability that JV felt, but what they went through is nothing in comparison to what my family survived in 1989. We were confronted with the ruthless armed threat and the power-grabbing attempt of Gringo Honasan (whom as a senator I've already interviewed on my program, where he talked about "trabaho lang, walang personalan") and his fellow coup plotters.

Compassionate military

The Estradas are blessed that with

God's grace the entire military today is professional, patriotic and compassionate. Gen. Angelo Reyes ensured that the departure of President Estrada from Malacañang would be conducted with dignity, and in fact was present to insure this.

As I was writing this (late Monday night, Jan. 22), I received another text message from JV: "We're down already, pls stop kicking us na." I responded that I would not add fuel to the fire, and I would only conduct myself fairly and without partiality in all my subsequent telecasts and columns, in particular with regard to their family, if he would apologize sincerely for his attacks on my mom.

He said he was sorry, what he said was motivated by hurt and not malice. His subsequent messages reiterated his stand that his dad might have his faults but he wasn't an evil man.

I believe in being vigilant about upholding the truth and respecting our justice system. I am young enough to believe that healing is possible, provided there is sincere repentance and a genuine effort to change for the better. I believe it is never too late to correct the mistakes of arrogant youth. I believe in God's infinite ability to forgive, and inspire forgiveness.

My life now is actual proof of the opportunities that second chances afford us.

A happy and peaceful weekend to all of us. Take care of you and yours.

Slapshock launches 2nd album

THE STAGE is set for the launching of Slapshock's 2nd album, "Headtrip," tonight at the UP Bahay ng Alumni.

Myra Ruaro a.k.a. Skarlet of the Brownbeat All-Stars will be the special guest for the launch.

You can attend the launch by being among the first 1,000 buyers of Slapshock's "Headtrip" album at any Odyssey Music Store or SM Record Bar

branches in Metro Manila. There are

free invites inside copies of the album.

Those who have already bought "Headtrip" can have their own copies validated for free invites on a first come, first served basis at the OctoArts EMI Music Office, 25/F Atlanta Center, Annapolis St., Greenhills, San Juan.

The album launch is presented by OctoArts EMI/Virgin.

"DEAD POETS SOCIETY" + "DANGEROUS MINDS" = CROWD PLEASER
2nd INSPIRATIONAL FEEL-GOOD WEEK!

MTRCB RATING: G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED

DENZEL WASHINGTON

Before they could win, they had to become one.

REMEMBER THE TITANS

BASED ON A TRUE STORY

Distributed by BUENA VISTA INTERNATIONAL thru COLUMBIA PICTURES

Bagong Taon... Bagong Kampon !!!
OPENS JANUARY 31

MTRCB RATING: G GENERAL PATRONAGE ALL AGES ADMITTED

Demonyita

Elizabeth Oropesa
Gladys Reyes • Angelica Panganiban
Raymond Bagatsing and Piel Morena

Tabi Tabi Po

Photographed by Romy Vitug, fsc. • Written & Directed by Joven M. Tan, kdpp

mister Donut

FLT Films International

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City Tel. No. 8981440-41

RED PLANET 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR? 12:50, 2:40, 4:30, 6:20, 8:10, 10:00	MEET THE PARENTS 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20
LITTLE NICKY 1:40, 3:45, 5:50, 7:55, 10:00	REMEMBER THE TITANS 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20	HIGHLANDER 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

SECOND WEEK LOADS OF COOL GADGETRY & IMPRESSIVE SPECIAL EFFECTS

MTRCB PG Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

VAL KILMER CARRIE ANNE MOSS TOM SIZEMORE

Not a sound. Not a warning. Not a chance. Not alone.

RED PLANET

WARNER BROS. PICTURES

SM CINEMA MEGAMALL

SPECIAL ADVANCE SCREENING

TOM HANKS

At the edge of the world, his journey begins

CAST AWAY

JAN 26 (FRI); 7 PM & 9 PM SCREENINGS

MTRCB RATING P13

LOC onstage at Ciao

VOICES that enthrall, violins that soothe from just one league of music makers.

Catch the League of Cayuca as they dominate Friday entertainment at Ciao Bar-Restaurant at Dusit Hotel, starting 10 p.m.

The group, lead by violinist Jay Cayuca, sings a repertoire of pop, jazz and other favorites.

For inquiries, call 867-3333 or Maxi-Media at 813-8999.

MTRCB RATING: PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

"THRILLING!"

"An adrenaline-pumping, heart-stopping adventure that never lets up!"

Vertical Limit

Pagdating sa action thriller, ito ang walang limit! Makapigil-hiningang aksyon mula simula hanggang huli! SULIT NA SULIT ANG BAYAD. SINGGANDA NG 'CLIFFHANGER'! For maximum enjoyment, watch only on the wide screen. Huwag palampasin!

GRAND OPENING JAN. 31 AT A THEATER NEAR YOU!

AYALA CINEMAS

Invite you to celebrate the

Gala Re-opening of the

All Digital Sound, All Guaranteed Seats

GREENBELT CINEMA

with the

SPECIAL PREVIEW of

CAST AWAY

January 26, 2001 (Friday)
7:30 PM & 10:30 PM
Greenbelt Cinemas

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
Tickets are now available at the Greenbelt Cinema Ticket Booth.

Special thanks to:

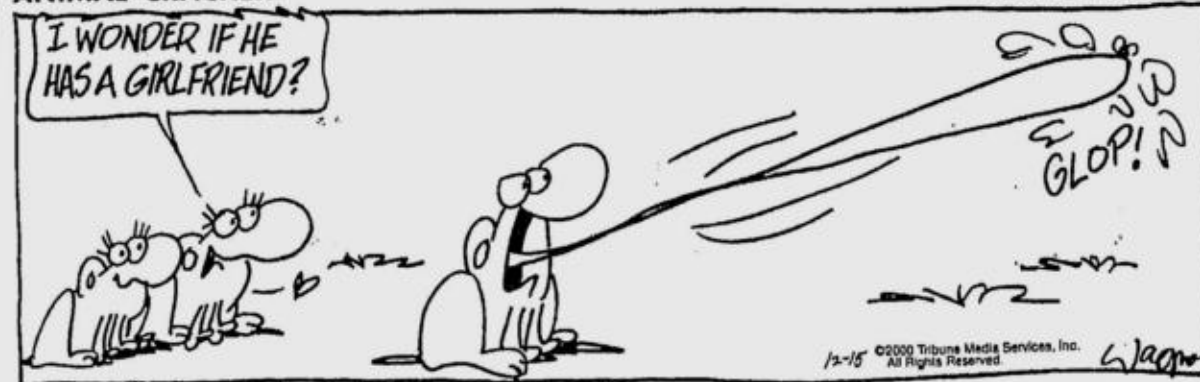
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS



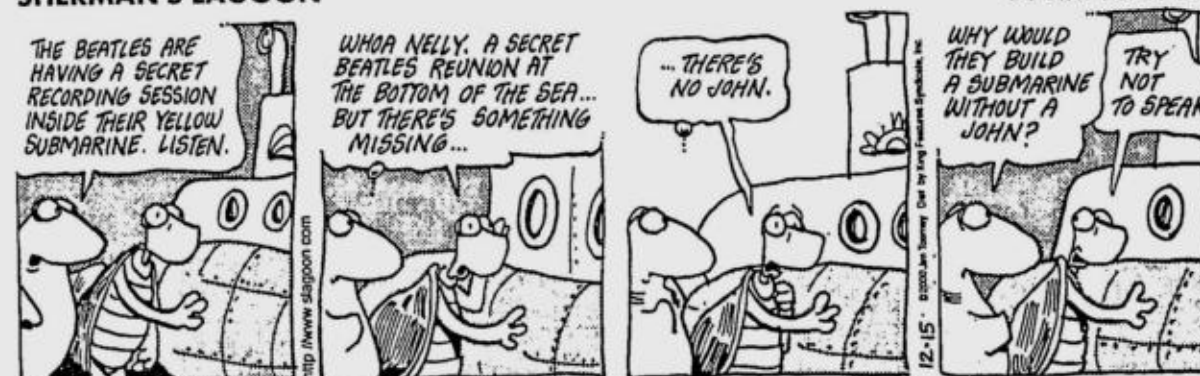
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER



SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY



BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT



HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Wayne Gretzky, Anita Baker, Paul Newman, Eddie Van Halen, Scott Glenn, Angela Davis, Jules Feiffer, Ellen DeGeneres, Andrew Ridgeley, Ellen DeGeneres
Happy Birthday: Your vision will be broad this year. You can offer great suggestions, but don't waste your time if others don't want to follow your lead. Go it alone if necessary and you'll be the one who accomplishes the most. Overdoing it can be your greatest downfall. Know your limits, know when to say no, and do for yourself first. Your numbers: 4, 17, 19, 23, 28, 35

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't let anyone talk you into doing things that you'd prefer not to do. You need to please yourself for a change instead of everyone else. It's time to follow your own beliefs and not someone else's.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Financial failures are likely if you expanded your interests too quickly. Look into ways of helping children or relatives solve their problems without donating your own funds.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Look into career opportunities that will lead to a higher earning potential. You need to use your ingenuity if you want to get ahead. Believe in yourself and so will others.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You are beginning to see things through different eyes. Your awareness is growing, and your motives are changing. Don't be afraid to follow a new direction. You must take control of your future.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will have regrets if you allow a dispute to get out of hand. Be cautious how you handle both your business and emotional partnerships.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Words of love will be dancing through your head. Get out with that special person in your life. You need to spend time enjoying the finer things in life.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Uncertainties on the home front should not be cause for alarm. A move is evident, and the problems that exist will be eliminated. Just bide your time and let things unfold as they may.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Clear up that overdue correspondence. Don't get intimate with colleagues or involved in gossip at work. Pleasure trips will break your budget. Be prepared to make cutbacks.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You would be wise not to be tempted to take part in joint financial ventures. You may have difficulties with your stomach if you overindulge or eat spicy foods.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Your emotions are likely to take over today. It is best to work by yourself. Don't let anyone goad you into a debate. You really need your peace and quiet.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Making changes to your home, particularly in your rec room or home-entertainment center, will help ensure that your family will spend more time together.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your need to interact with others can be satisfied if you sign up to help worthy organizations. You have a knack for putting things together well, and for paying close attention to small but important details. Your services will be valued.

Birthday Baby: You have a fascinating way of looking at life. You are ingenious, outgoing and forever trying to help others. You have a great desire to do something worthwhile.

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA



PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR



SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA



KATREENA

BY JOY CONIENDO



BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON



MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER



LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



CLAIRE

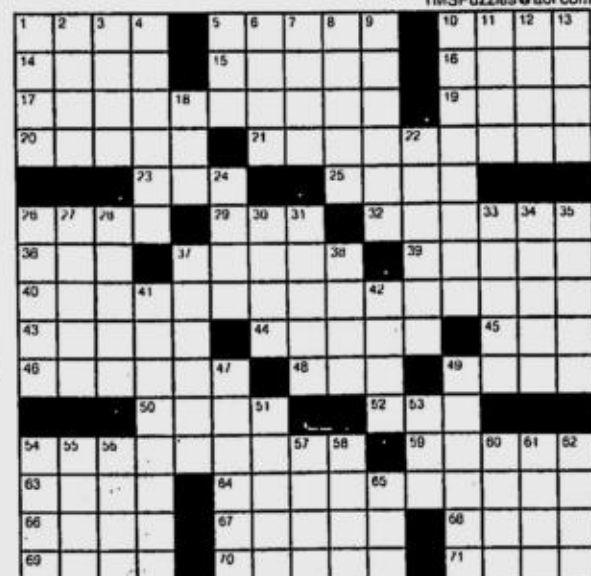
BY DOUG SHANNON



DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Goddess of victory
- 5 Single-masted vessel
- 10 Disconcert
- 14 Haley or Trebek
- 15 Libyan gulf
- 16 Manchurian border river
- 17 University in Malibu
- 19 Ms. Anderson
- 20 Praise
- 21 Thin paper
- 23 Mr. Sun?
- 25 Scottish dagger
- 26 Arrived
- 29 Adherent: suff.
- 32 Becomes entrenched
- 36 Turkish title
- 37 Sky blue
- 39 Shorthand, for short
- 40 Debby Boone's mother-in-law
- 43 Maine college town
- 44 Deathly pale
- 45 Mispickal, e.g.
- 46 Mediator's formula
- 48 Sock end
- 49 Liberal
- 50 Armed conflicts
- 52 Order form
- 54 Roman assembly halls
- 59 1957 hit, "Wake Up Little"
- 63 Aida or Ladd
- 64 Advancements by leaps and bounds
- 66 Okay-dokay
- 67 Internet service
- 68 Neighbor of Vietnam
- 69 Buyer-beware warning
- 70 Skyline feature
- 71 Pisa's river



By Janet R. Bender
Somerset, PA

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

PUMA	BPOE	OBESE
LSAT	ARMY	DEMUR
ANIL	LINE	EAMES
YALE	VSM	MISSSTATE
NEAP	ESE	
SCAGGS	ROSANNAS	
AORTA	AEON	OBO
WASHSTV	SHOUSTON	
ETO	REES	NACRE
RINEHART	FIGHTS	
ROI	IOTA	
AUBURN	VSCLEMMSON	
CROPS	ELIE	OLLA
DANTE	DAILY	RAIN
CLASS	AMYS	ETNA

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- 38 Sound rebound
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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

The grief of the Estradas, the assault on the Aquinos

KRIS AND TELL



Kris Aquino

IN the early afternoon of Saturday, Jan. 20, shortly before they departed Malacañang and when thousands of anti-Erap protesters, although peaceful, were on Mendiola, JV Ejercito sent me a text message. He lamented the fact that his father had "... agreed to a peaceful transition, but it seems none of the agreements are being honored."

When he spoke before pro-Erap ralliers on Mendiola on Jan. 17, Wednesday night, JV had said that "former Presidents Aquino and Ramos had abused their power and enriched themselves in office." After receiving his message, I replied that, despite his baseless accusations against my mom, in this time of need I wouldn't turn my back on him, and in fact continued to pray for him and his family.

He responded: "They are letting the mob come near. If I have to die here with him, then so be it."

Maybe we should understand that JV grew up with an action star for a father and should be forgiven if he's prone to dramatic language and expectations of movie-like slam-bang action finale.

Every time JV is attacked about his being *mayabang*, and those attacks stress the fact that he is illegitimate, I always take personal offense because the same can be said for my son Joshua, who also has an action star for a father and was also born out of wedlock.

The circumstances of JV's birth are really not his fault. His responsibility is only for the actions he has taken in his life. My sisters can't understand the soft spot I have for him, especially since they had heard stories that he, in front of his close friends, would be sarcastic and ungentlemanly regarding my communications with him. I know that the parallels in his situation and my son's have a lot to do with it. But my mom continues to pray that Joshua will have an exemplary stepfather, and believe me, her prayers are always answered.

Powerful images

The subsequent videos shown on television of the departure of the former President and his family, particularly the tears shed by Jackie and JV when they were leaving Malacañang, were very powerful images of grief that, in a weird way, I understood.

It was evident how much the unassuming Jackie Ejercito Lopez was loved by the people who worked in the Palace when she was warmly embraced by the woman seen on TV wailing "Ma'am Jackie" with such sincere pain. That particular

goodbye really brought tears to my eyes.

After my mom turned over the presidency to President Ramos in 1992, I cried during the entire ride from Luneta to my mom's home on Times Street, Quezon City. In my Mom's words "humagulgol" ako.

My mom had the most graceful exit possible for an outgoing president. The candidate she had endorsed to be her successor was victorious. She was leaving while she was still popular with the people. And history would credit her for the restoration of our country's democracy. And yet, I couldn't shake the melancholy that enveloped my heart.

My mom never shed a tear that entire time. She radiated relief.

Depth of despair

While I had felt that badly and suffered from so much insecurity about what the future would hold, I can only begin to imagine the depth of despair the Ejercito children were feeling, particularly after seeing on live TV the outpouring of outrage the millions of Filipinos had spontaneously and collectively expressed over their father's leadership and perceived attempt to suppress the truth.

It was painful for me then, even considering the fact that my mom had finished her term and was going at her appointed time and of her own free will. JV's father left because he was thrown out by the people's will, abandoned by the majority of his Cabinet, and with numerous criminal and civil cases awaiting him.

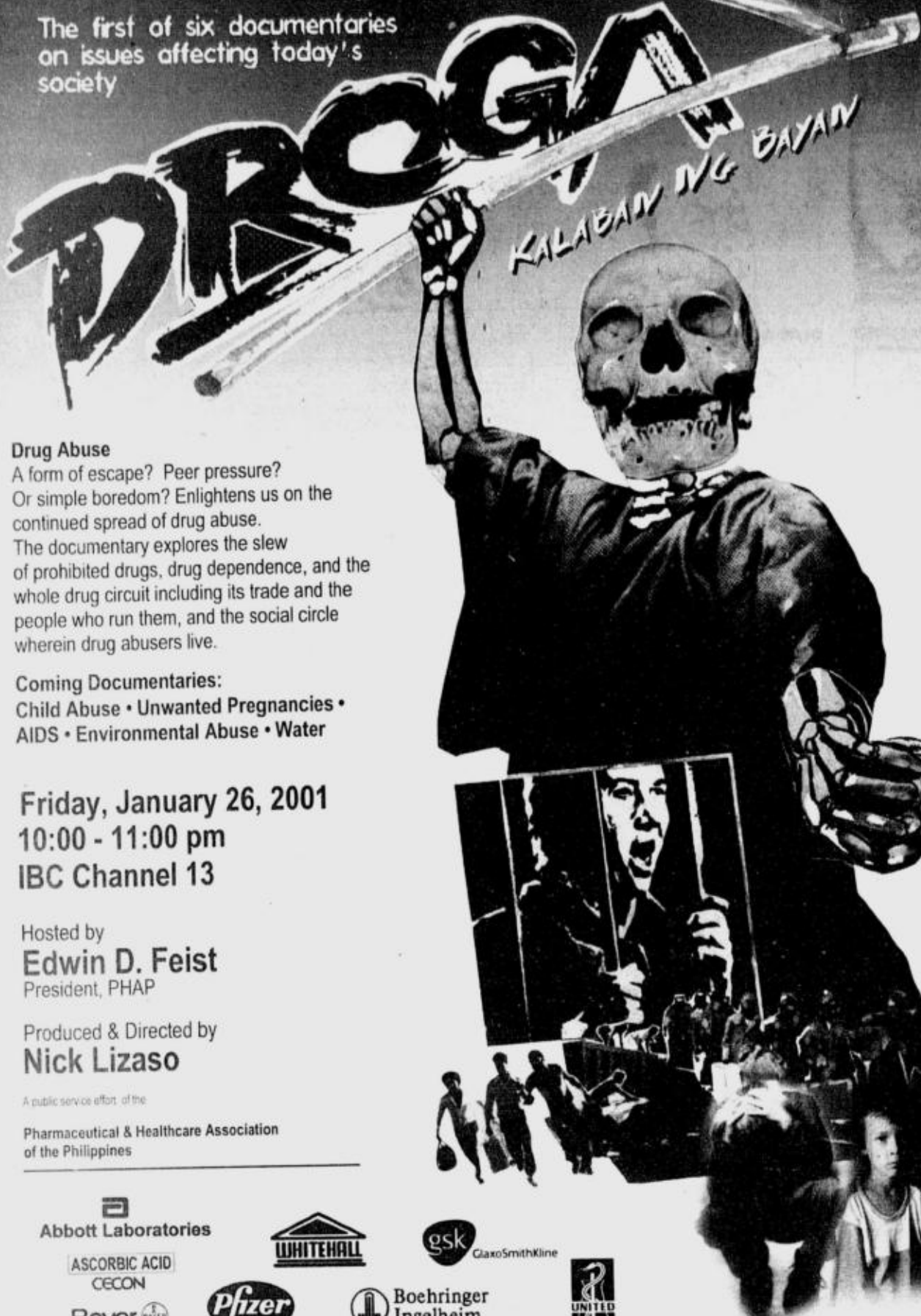
We in my family are survivors of numerous coup attacks launched to topple my mom's government. That's why I always take seriously any rumors of military unrest, and always pray for unity in our Armed Forces. The most serious one in December 1989 very nearly claimed our lives.

Dragged out of bed

A car parked right outside my bedroom window at our Arlegui residence exploded after a rocket hit it. I know what it's like to hear handguns and armalites firing loudly and indiscriminately mere

THE GRIEF/A24

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Produced & Directed by
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FRIDAY,
JANUARY 26, 2001

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

Equitable PCI
BANK
MEMBER: PDIIC

Bangko Sentral cuts rates further

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

BUOYED by a stable peso and improved business prospects, the policy-making Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday announced another half-percentage point cut in overnight rates effective Monday.

The central bank's overnight borrowing rates would go down to 12 percent and its lending rates would slip to 14.25 percent. These levels bring the Bangko

Sentral's key policy rates only a percentage point away from the pre-"Juetengate" rates.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said declining world crude oil prices and forecasts of stable food prices are expected to tame inflation toward the second half of the year.

These factors, he said, bolstered the resolve of monetary authorities to reduce rates by another 50 basis points during their regular meeting yesterday. The rate cut on Monday would be the third for

the year and the sixth since December last year.

The peso, he pointed out, would gradually stabilize as the volatility wears off in a week or two. He noted, however, that the market remained watchful as political and economic developments unfold.

The peso yesterday stood at 48.84 following an 80-centavo improvement last Wednesday to 48.35 to \$1.

The peso has rallied since Estrada was unseated last week and

replaced by his vice president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. It fell to a record low 55.8 to the dollar in the final days of Estrada's administration.

The Bangko Sentral uses overnight rates as a tool to maintain price stability and to help ward off volatility in the peso. It had increased overnight rates by four percentage points last October to help defend the currency following the Juetengate scandal.

"The reduction of the political risk premium signals a favorable

outlook for the country's financial markets and impacts positively on prospects for growth and inflation," Buenaventura said.

The central bank governor also pointed out that indications of declining trend in the US short-term rates augured favorably for local interest rates as well as the currency.

He pointed out also that a significant across-the-board decline in the treasury bill rates last Monday firmed up the resolve of the

policy-making Monetary Board to pull down rates some more.

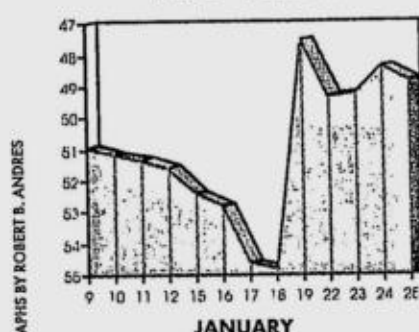
The 91-day treasury bill rate, the benchmark borrowing rate of the government, went down by 0.605 percentage point. The longer tenors slid by 1.101 percentage points in the auction last Monday.

The cut in the central bank's rates is expected to lead to a further decline in the government's borrowing rates on Monday as reflected by the benchmark 91-day treasury bill yield.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



Peso-Dollar Rate

P 48.84 = \$1

As of 5 p.m.,
Jan. 25, 2001

Y 117.96 = \$1

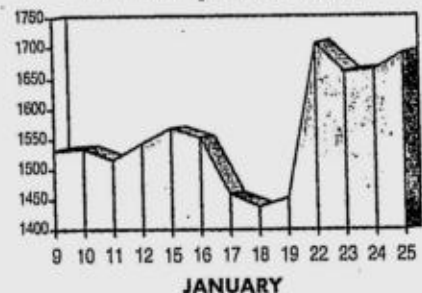
The US dollar was trading
at 117.96 as of 5 p.m.,
Jan. 25, 2001

GOLD: \$266.30/266.90

per ounce Hong Kong,
Jan. 22, 2001

STOCK MARKET

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares up 1.7%

SHARE prices closed 1.7 percent higher yesterday as fears that deposed President Estrada could attempt to regain power dissipated, brokers said.

"The market has discounted the coup rumors and investors are moving into stocks that (did not attract attention) in recent days," said Raul Nagraampa of Public Securities Inc.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 27.75 points to close at 1,693.18. Turnover rose to 4.9 billion shares but value fell to P826 million compared to 2.39 billion shares worth P1.15 billion traded on Wednesday.

Dealers said the market was settling down and investors were moving their attention to shares which were overlooked in the initial rally at the start of the week.

"It's a continuation of the consolidation. There was a lot of activity in second-liners," said Nina Carpio of Orion-Squire Capital Inc. **AFP**

Cosmos income surges 31%

COSMOS Bottling Corp. reported a 31-percent growth in net income to P683 million last year from P522 million in 1999 as a result of higher sales volume, improved sales mix and effective management of cost pressures.

Cash flow figures grew 34 percent as earnings before interest and taxes plus depreciation and amortization jumped from P1.1 billion in 1999 to P1.5 billion in 2000.

Based on unaudited sales results, Cosmos' consolidated net sales for 2000 grew by 28 percent to P5.2 billion from P4.1 billion on the back of a 25-percent growth in sales.

ABS-CBN raising ad rates

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. said it would raise advertising rates next month as more viewers tune in to its programming.

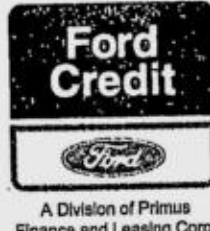
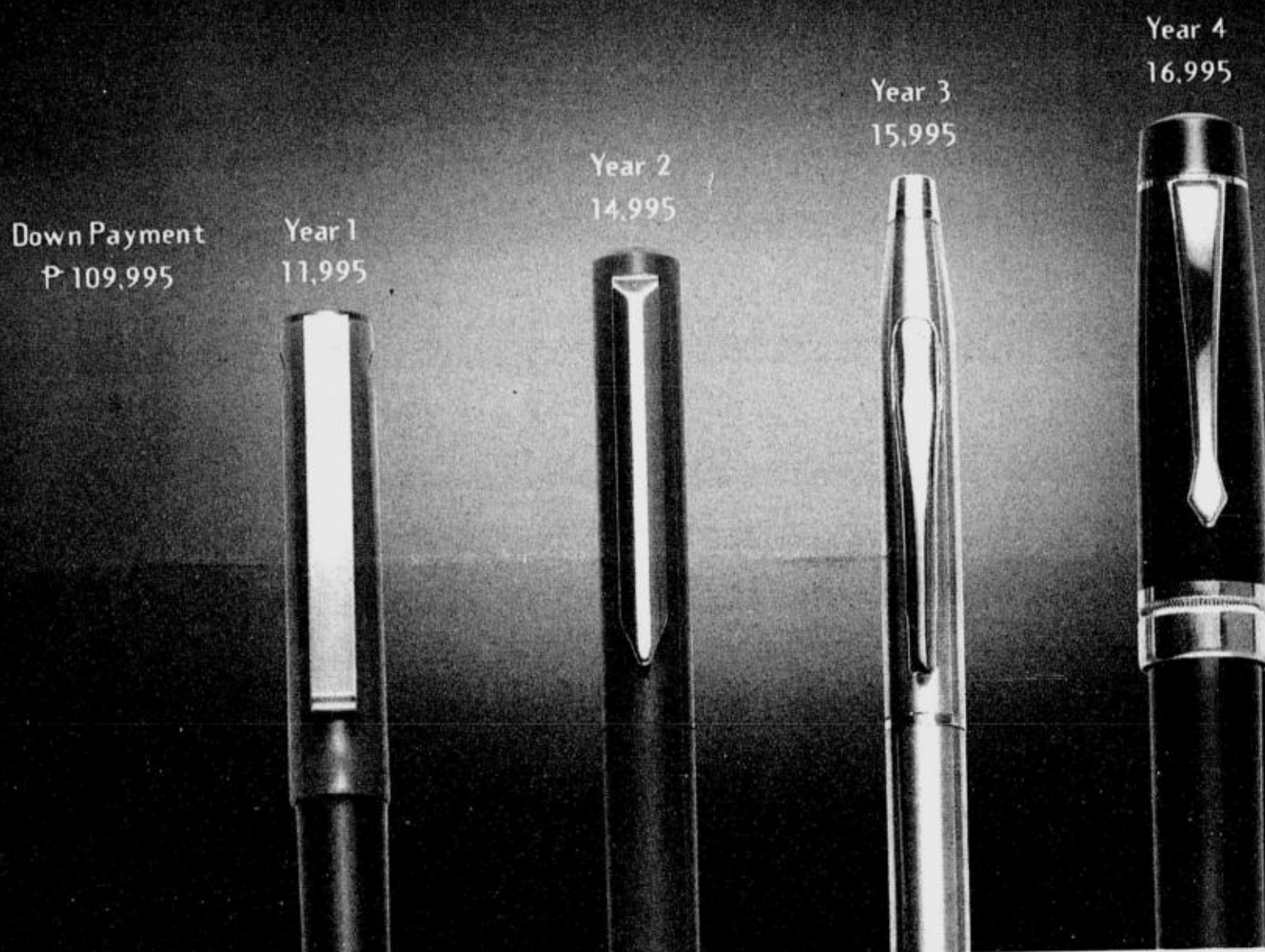
"We are implementing a rate hike primarily because our (television) ratings can still justify a rate increase," said Bong Calma, investor-relations director at ABS-CBN. Calma declined to specify how much the company's rates would rise. Last year, the broadcaster raised rates by an average of 16 percent.

Rate increases have driven revenue growth at ABS-CBN in the last three years, despite weak consumer demand in the Philippines.

Calma said the broadcaster's market share rose to 47 percent of viewers at the end of last year, from 43 percent at end-1999. **Bloomberg**

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Ford EDSA, 29 EDSA, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila
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National Steel receiver recommends liquidation

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

THE INTERIM receiver of National Steel Corp. has recommended the liquidation of the ailing steel company through the outright sale of operating assets or a joint venture of secured creditors with a strategic investor.

Other assets of NSC, such as pieces of real estate in Iligan, Pasig, Bohol, Makati, Antipolo and Benguet and various fixed assets as well as inventory and supplies, will be disposed of through public auction, negotiated sale or bid, whichever is more applicable.

NSC interim receiver Danilo Concepcion proposed these moves in the liquidation plan he submitted yesterday to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Concepcion said that segregating the assets of NSC into two categories, plant assets and other assets,

was aimed at ensuring the disposition of NSC's Iligan steel plant as an integral facility and to allow a prospective buyer to revive the steel company's operations within a short-period of time from acquisition.

The liquidator also said that the segregation allowed for the orderly application of the disposal proceeds wherein the Iligan plant would be used to settle claims of secured creditors, which as a group represent the biggest percentage of NSC liabilities, and the other assets to be applied to other company obligations, principally the claims of employees.

Currently, NSC's fixed assets are being re-appraised to establish sound value for the various assets falling within each category, Concepcion said.

Under the liquidation plan, the plant assets may be disposed through an outright sale to an independent buyer on cash or terms basis.

The sale will be awarded to the bidder or buyer that offers the best price.

On the other hand, the plant assets could be conveyed to a new operating company whose shares will be distributed among the creditors having mortgage and preference over the assets. The operating company will enter into a joint venture agreement with a partner wherein the company will contribute the assets while the partner will pump in the capital needed to rehabilitate the plant.

The joint venture partner may come in as a subscriber to a percentage of the equity of the operating company or as an operator pursuant to a profit-sharing agreement or such other agreement not involving direct equity participation in the operating company.

Concepcion said the overriding consideration in the asset disposal

was the immediate restoration of NSC's business and resumption of the plant's operations.

He said prospective buyers or joint venture partners must have the following minimum qualifications: capacity and willingness to operate the most number of production lines within six months to one year and to mobilize the workers within a period of one to three months, technical capability, financial capacity and export market reach.

He estimated that total liabilities of NSC as of September amounted to P19 billion.

Based on offers so far received for the plant assets, he said, the proceeds of the sale of these assets would fall short of totally covering the obligations to secured creditors and the government. Therefore, the deficiency will be included among other unsecured creditors.

Victorias owners junk creditors' rehab plan

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

SHAREHOLDERS of cash-strapped Victorias Milling Corp. yesterday voted to accept an alternative proposal to rehabilitate the country's biggest sugar mill through a \$153-million loan package arranged by London-based Kest Quartermain Venture Capital.

In a special meeting yesterday, shareholders representing a 53.83-percent interest in VMC in effect rejected the rehabilitation plan earlier proposed by the company's management committee (mancom) and approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

VMC president Manuel Mañalac, whose resignation would take effect on Jan. 31, told the stockholders that they should push for the alternative rehabilitation plan as the blueprint pushed by the mancom stood favorable to the creditor-banks.

Under the proposal approved by the shareholders, the \$153 million to be arranged by Kest Quartermain via a fresh loan from financial giant GE Capital would be used to pay off P6.56 billion worth of obligations to creditor-banks, of which P5.18 billion represented principal loans and about P1.38 billion were interest payments.

To guarantee repayment of the loan, the proposal said VMC would put up a sinking fund to be built up from the company's cash flow or Kest Quartermain's commitment to subscribe to P4.1 billion worth of a rights offering on the 10th year of the rehabilitation plan.

Kest Quartermain, for its part, will receive a 50-percent discount on the principal and accrued interest, payable in equal installments over a seven-year period. The discount will be taken up as a fee.

On the other hand, Mañalac warned that under the rehabilitation plan proposed by the mancom, which is led by the creditors, the banks would be able to take over control of VMC at a very cheap price via some P1.5 billion in receivables that would be converted into equity.

"But these are interests accrued to the banks, not VMC. These are the shares they want to convert to end up owning 70 percent of the company," Mañalac said.

Even if the banks sold the receivables at a discount, Mañalac said they still stood to earn a lot at the expense of the shareholders whose stakes would be diluted after the conversion.

Aside from the portion to be converted into equity, the mancom's blueprint would allow another P2.4 billion in VMC's debts to become convertible notes. Only the remaining P3.5 billion to P4 billion in debt would be serviced at a concessional rate of 10 percent over a period of 10 years.

Mañalac convinced the shareholders that the package arranged by Kest Quartermain was more favorable to the company.

The creditor-banks, for their part, are opposing this package because the money from GE Capital represented another loan and not really a capital infusion.

The banks also noted that while the proceeds would be used to retire existing loans, they would still shoulder all the risks involved in the package, which they believed would not result in any debt reduction but only increases the risks of default.

The banks have also stressed that VMC would need to generate P1.16 billion in annual cash flow to service the proposed package. They said such a plan was not feasible because they do not believe VMC would be able to generate enough revenue to service these obligations.

The rehab blueprint proposed by the mancom, meanwhile, capped VMC's debt servicing requirements at only P400 million.

Bayantel seeks link-up units from Piltel

BY ANTHONY O. ALCANTARA

BAYAN Telecommunications Inc. has sought additional interconnection trunks from Pilipino Telephone Corp. as a result of increasing congestion between the two networks in General Santos City in Mindanao.

A source from the National Telecommunications Commission yesterday said Bayantel officials went to the NTC to inform the quasi-judicial body of the ongoing negotiations for interconnection.

He said this was to brief the NTC in advance in case talks reach an impasse that would call for the intervention of the NTC.

"The two parties were already discussing how to go about it. Piltel said it was willing to interconnect and only the small details needed to be threshed out," the source said.

Bayantel earlier asked for two EIs or interconnection trunks to alleviate traffic congestion between the two networks in General Santos City. The company hoped that Piltel would activate at least one EI trunk as soon as possible.

An EI trunk is a piece of equipment that would allow 30 simultaneous calls between two fixed line networks. However, using special technology could enhance this capacity and more than double it.

Elizabeth R. Locsin, vice president for corporate and carrier management of the integrated broadband services unit of the Lopez Group, was not available for comment yesterday. Likewise, Piltel officials were also unavailable.

Earlier this year, the NTC said it would soon propose a fault reporting system that would expedite the resolution of technical aspects of interconnection between two telephone firms.

Interconnection, which is a significant source of revenue for phone firms, has been fraught with commercial as well as technical issues that hamper link-up and inconvenience subscribers.

NTC Commissioner Joseph A. Santiago earlier said this new fault reporting system would help phone firms deal with the technical aspects of interconnection in a speedy manner by not involving higher management in simple technical problems.

He said Bayantel and PLDT, which is Piltel's parent company, have initiated these moves for this new fault reporting system.

BAYANTEL/B3

Philippine Stock Exchange

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
(As of Thursday, January 25, 2001)					
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	70.00	71.5	69.5	71	979,900
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	57.00	58.5	57	58.5	169,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	236.0	242	236	240	191,910
Philippine National Bank	33.50	34.5	32	32	530,800
Phil. Savings Bank	29.50	29.5	29.5	29.5	1,000
Rizal Comm'l Bkg. Corp. "A"	28.00	28	28	28	77,700
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	141,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1280	1280	1280	1280	1,790
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.24	1.18	1.24	1.24	40,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1095	1085	1070	1090	4,730
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	49.50	50	49	49.5	115,700
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	2,700	74	67	73	4,800,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	790	790	780	780	110
Island Info and Tech Inc.	.0850	.0725	.085	.0725	53,600,000
Liberty Telecom Holdings	.4700	.47	.47	.47	30,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	4.00	4	4	4	10,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	.7100	.71	.68	.69	1,020,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel. Co.	.4500	.47	.45	.45	120,000
Smart Corp.	920.0	925	920	925	530
Smart Corp.	1.10	1.16	1.1	1.14	4,620,000
Philweb.com Inc.	.0650	.0775	.065	.0775	886,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. "A"	55.00	56.5	55	56.5	106,700
Manila Electric Co. "B"	59.00	62	59	62	1,376,300
Petrone Corp.	1.82	1.94	1.8	1.94	19,951,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	99.00	1	.99	1	140,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	108,000
JNT Container Term'l SV	1.00	1.16	1.00	1.14	6,763,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	.5100	.53	.51	.52	1,670,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	.8100	.81	.81	.81	10,000
Union Cement Corp.	.7000	.75	.7	.75	2,300,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.16	2.2	2.18	2.2	40,000
Coastal Bottling Corp.	2.50	2.5	2.5	2.5	10,000
Joilbee Foods Corp.	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.25	266,800
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	35.50	36.5	35.5	36.5	62,100
Pancake House Inc.	1.50	1.6	1.6	1.6	2,000
RFM Corp.	1.02	1.08	1	1.06	7,046,000
San Miguel Corp. "A"	49.00	50	49	50	35,100
San Miguel Corp. "B"	58.00	60	58	60	698,900
Vitarich Corp.	.4400	.48	.44	.46	400,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	10.00	10	9.9	9.9	1,700
Abacus Con Res & Hdg "A"	5.400	5.4	5.4	5.4	10,000
Ayala Corp.	8.40	8.5	8.4	8.4	2,868,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	.4400	.44	.44	.44	20,000
Abotit Equity Ventures	1.82	1.82	1.6	1.6	41,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.75	12.75	12.25	12.75	43,000
Aja Nat Holdings Inc.	1.04	1.12	1.04	1.12	1,117,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.000	3	2.25	2.25	33,320,000
Alcom Gold Res. Corp.	.0055	.0055	.0055	.0055	8,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	20,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2.00	2	2	2	15,000
Baleba Resources & Hldgs.	.4000	4	4	4	100,000
Bempres Holdings Corp.	3.25	3.1	3.05	3.1	23,222,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	2.200	2.225	2.2	2.225	650,000
Crown Equities Inc.	.3000	3	.29	.29	930,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	.4500	.5	.45	.5	2,390,000
Etecom Holdings Inc.	.2000	.215	.19	.2	2,770,000
Ever-Goteco Resources	.0650	.065	.06	.06	1,500,000
Fi-Estate Corp.	1.70	1.8	1.7	1.7	1,000,000
Fininvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.02	1.08	7,160,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	23.75	24	23.5	24	72,500
Global Equities Inc.	.4300	.46	.43	.43	4,960,000
Guoco Holdings (Phila.)	.2900	.31	.29	.31	610,000
Ionics Inc.	15.00	15	14.75	14.75	94,000
J.S. Sumitl Holdings Inc.	2.80	2.7	2.65	2.65	47,000
Macrosia Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.1	2.1	10,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. "A"	.0200	.022	.02	.022	6,700,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. "B"	.0210	.021	.021	.021	500,000
Megaworld Corp.	.9000	.92	.9	.91	21,130,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	.2000	2	.2	.2	40,000
Muechies Inv. Corp.	.2900	.29	.29	.29	1,050,000
Northern Pacific Corp.	6.500	6.5	6.5	6.5	14,760,000
Solid Group Inc.	.0300	.72	.63	.7	19,590,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	.1500	.15	.15	.15	200,000
Unilife Holdings Inc.	.4200	.45	.41	.45	60,670,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	.4700	.48	.47	.48	80,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	3.000	3.4	.28	.31	8,690,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
A Brown Company Inc.	.7000	7	.7	.7	160,000
Macdonayd Plastics Inc.	6.40	6.4	6.2	6.4	14,000
Music Corp.	3.40	3.5	3.4	3.4	721,000
Picop Resources Inc.	1.500	1.65	1.5	1.6	1,720,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	9.400	9.4	9.4	9.4	40,000
SPT Technologies Inc.	9.00	9.1	9	9.1	40,000
Staniel Manufacturing	.5900	6	.59	6	280,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	.6900	.69	.68	.69	8,310,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	.5300	.74	.63	.72	10,830,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	5.300	5.2	5.1	5.1	8,310,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	.3000	3.1	.3	.31	340,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	49.00	49.5	49	49.5	101,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	565.0	565	565	565	200
Equitable PCI Bank-War	8.50	8.5	8.5	8.5	224,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (PDR)	900.0	900	780	780	1,910
Joilbee Warrants	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	85,000
Macrosia Corp. Warrants	.4100	.41	.41	.41	50,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	.0032	.0042	.0032	.0042	2,008,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	11.00	11	10.25	10.25	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.50	11	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.50	10.5	10	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.50	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,800
PLDT 10% Pref Series "Aa"	9.60	9.6	9.6	9.6	2,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	9.90	10	9.9	10	1,605,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.80	7	6.8	6.9	6,552,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	.4000	.42	.4	.42	180,000
Cityland Development Corp.	3.00	3	3	3	4,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.100	4.45	4.1	4.45	800,000
C & P Homes Inc.	.3600	4	.38	.39	37,610,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	.4300	.5	.42	.5	3,730,000
Empire East Land Inc.	.5100	.51	.49	.49	15,350,000
Fillinvest Land Inc.	2.16	2.3	2.16	2.3	15,127,000
Gotesco Land Inc. "B"	1.00	.05	.05	.05	1,600,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	.2000	2	.19	.19	2,000
Phil-Estate Land Inc.	.5000	.5	.47	.5	1,040,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	.5000	.55	.5	.55	400,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	.1600	.19	.16	.19	30,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.02	2.02	1.99	2	290,000
Phil. Realty and Holdings	.2400	.24	.24	.24	170,000
SM Development Corp.	.9900	1	.99	1	60,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.80	6.9	6.8	6.9	2,849,000
Universal Rightshold Prop.	1.250	1.25	1.2	1.2	8,230,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	.0080	.46	.4	.45	760,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	.0080	.008	.007	.008	7,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	.0070	.008	.007	.008	14,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	.0070	.008	.008	.008	82,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	26,000
Ilogon-Buyoo Mines "A"	.0200	.023	.02	.022	26,800,000
Ilogon-Buyoo Mines "B"	.0200	.02	.02	.02	1,000,000
Lebanon Cons. Mng. Co. "A"	24.000	24	24	24	150,000
Manila Mining Corp. "A"	.0070	.007	.007	.007	37,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. "B"	.0070	.007	.007	.007	88,000,000
Omico Corp.	.0048	.0055	.0046	.0055	629,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't. Corp.	.0220	.026	.022	.026	108,400,000
Philrex Mining Corp. "B"	.2400	.24	.24	.24	100,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	.0280	.038	.029	.034	88,000,000
Interport Res.	.0070	.007	.007	.007	7,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. "A"	.0055	.006	.0055	.006	293,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. "B"	.0080	.008	.008	.008	280,000,000
Pacific	.0190	.022	.019	.021	192,400,000
Sinohydro Corp.	1.100	1.1	1.1	1.1	3,500,000
Vulcan Ind'l.	.2400	.245	.24	.24	690,000

The 2nd Malacañang

DESPITE the public declaration of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo that he would probably only be a photographer of his better half—to signal that he would not meddle in the official business of Malacañang—job-seekers, politicians, NGO-types, and influence peddlers continue to beseech him in the hope of getting a favorable word to the new President.

Those who had failed to catch GMA and Mike A at the Linden Suites when GMA was still dreaming of Malacañang have now been flocking to Mike A's office at the LTA Building in Legaspi Village.

What has also greatly increased pedestrian traffic flow is that the Lakas party general headquarters and the Carpio Villaraza and Cruz law offices—both FVR and GMA's counsels—are also within the same building.

With the non-stop flow of important-looking visitors bearing sheaves of documents and the Presidential Security Guards securing the premises, the once quiet building—named after Lourdes T. Arroyo, Mike A's mother—is ironically beginning to look like a second Malacañang.

And with so many No. 8 SUVs of "balimbing" congressmen and their back-up vehicles, parking has quite become a nightmare for Perea, the tree-lined street fronting the LTA building.

A few residents of the adjoining Mayfair condominium, where former Lakas muse Rosemarie "Baby" Arenas holds court, could not help but get annoyed about the parking congestion and, at the same time, get wryly amused about the resurgent popularity of their neighborhood.

Who was that again who said, "weather-weather lang yan?"

Uninvited guest

THOSE who received the invitation for the Feb. 5 inauguration of the gleaming RCBC Plaza should not be surprised that the invite still lists you-know-who as the President of the Republic of the Philippines.

The invite had been printed long before the Malacañang changeover; as a matter of fact, as late as Jan. 18, when the world was collapsing beneath their feet, the Estrada-protocol officers were still meeting with the RCBC organizers on the assumption that you-know-who would honor the invitation.

Yesterday, RCBC issued a news release saying Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would now be the guest-of-honor in the Feb. 5 event, a diplomatic way of correcting the unforeseen and unintended invitational gaffe.

The question is, what if a suddenly unemployed actor, who still believes that he is merely on leave from Malacañang, shows up for the event in his signature Paul Cabral-barong?

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin



Thanksgiving sales

ROBINSONS Galleria, particularly the fast-food stalls within the Ortigas mall, made tons and tons of money during last week's People Power II, a euphoric rebound from the anemic sales registered during the last quarter of 2000.

The Gokongwei-owned Galleria Suites was even fully booked, specially during the Friday and Saturday climax events, a windfall only seen during the ADB regional conferences.

Even the usually half-filled Metrostar Express night coaches were wall-to-wall with agitated passengers rushing to and fro the historic rally site.

To share their good fortunes and the bloodless resolution of the People Power II, the entire mall and even the whole of the Robinson's chain of department stores will hold a thanksgiving sale-of-sorts on Feb. 2, 3, and 4.

Even the unrelated ShopWise department store/supermarket chain is celebrating what seems to be a nascent economic turnaround with a three-week long "Fresh Start" sale starting this weekend.

Short takes

• THE TWO Estrada-nominated boards are still slugging it out at the sequestered Philcomsat/POTC group, each claiming to be the legitimate board.

Ironically, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's own nominee sits on both warring boards.

• IT was the Fortun Narvasa law offices that wrote the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, asking how much P1 million in P1,000 notes weigh.

The Bangko Sentral wrote back, confidentially as requested, that the amount in such denominations weigh "about one kilogram."

How the information got to Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, with the Cagayan solon himself asking Chavit Singson and himself volunteering the answer, is subject to anyone's mischievous interpretation.

Heard through the grapevine

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo announced on Saturday afternoon right after her swearing-in that former Sen. Alberto Romulo was her choice for finance secretary.

That evening, a bouquet of flowers with a congratulatory card from taipan Lucio Tan had already been delivered to Romulo's Valle Verde home.

BANKER George Go is back in town. (Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Globe, Megaworld sign deal

GLOBE Telecom, a joint venture between Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecom International, has entered into a five-year renewable contract with Megaworld Corp. for the provision of broadband

services to companies located at Eastwood City, the country's first cyberpark.

Jesus Romero, Globe assistant vice president for business communications, said they have already

wired Citibank Square and IBM Plaza in Libis, Quezon City, and the building tenants such as eTelecare, ABN Amro, Trend Micro, and Citibank, among others.

"We can serve them with our various services. IT (information technology) companies basically need and run on sophisticated or big bandwidth telecom facilities and we can provide all these," he said.

According to him, Globe has laid down fiber optic cables and has deployed data nodes throughout the area to ensure that broadband services are available whenever a client demands them.

Eastwood is open to all service providers and the locator or tenant has the option to subscribe to the services of any company it prefers.

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Bayantel

(From page B2)

"We will adopt this system in a new memorandum circular and make it a standard in the industry," he said. However, no time frame was given for coming out with the memorandum circular.

Bayantel officials also said it was about to sign an agreement with PLDT regarding the new system, but some minor technical aspects of the agreement have yet to be ironed out.

Early last year, PLDT reported unusual call traffic coming from some Bayantel subscribers. The company said it could mean illegal bypass operations.

Bayantel since then has disconnected these suspected illegal bypass operators and initiated moves to improve interconnection with the telecom giant. As a result, Bayantel reported a 100-percent call completion rate with PLDT late last year.



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THE VOLVO S80

BOI wants 8-year tax holiday for all projects

By GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is urging Congress to grant a minimum income tax break of eight years to all investment projects as a compromise between the two chambers' versions of a bill amending the Omnibus Investments Code.

This was revealed by Department of Trade and Industry Officer in Charge Thomas G. Aquino who said that failure to pass the changes in the Board of Investments' incentives package by next month would set back the Philippine investments performance by at least two years.

The House of Representatives has approved House Bill No. 10596, which beefs up the BOI's incentives with a 12-year income tax holiday for projects worth at least \$25 million.

The Senate, for its part, has yet to pass Senate Bill No. 1713, which, however, does not include a provision for granting income tax breaks.

Both bills, however, mandate the granting of new fiscal perks such as tax- and duty-free importation of capital equipment, net operating loss carryover and accelerated depreciation.

Aquino said the Department of Finance and the National Economic and Development Authority have backed a DTI position to grant a minimum income tax holiday of eight years to all projects regardless of investment size.

"We feel that an eight-year ITH would be just enough for the life cycle of an investment project because the tax breaks would be useless if the plant has become obsolete."

Aquino said the maximum 12-year ITH would be provided for big-ticket projects particularly in electronics. At present, the BOI grants an ITH of between four and six years, with an option to extend by another two years.

He said the DTI has made this suggestion as a compromise in order to rush the

approval of the bills in the bicameral conference committee. Aquino said it was crucial for Congress to pass the bills before it adjourns on Feb. 12 because the BOI was in dire need of boosting its incentive package to improve capital inflows. BOI-registered investments have plunged to P21 billion last year, its lowest in 10 years, due to lack of incentives.

Aquino said electronic companies, the country's top exporters, need at least a two-year gestation period before starting commercial operations.

The American Chamber of Commerce had cited the importance of sprucing up the incentive package to make it at par or better than those of other Asian economies competing for similar investments. It said these incentives have become even more important now that China, with its huge domestic market, and India are getting all the attention of corporate planners at the headquarters of large multinational companies.

Top HR agenda for President GMA

THE WHOLE world applauded the Philippines twice in 15 years for staging two bloodless revolutions that ousted two heads of state and installed in their places two lady presidents, who were both accepted by an overwhelming majority from a broad spectrum of the society. But let there be no illusions again. The serious problems of poverty, national security, corruption and social injustices still pose grave threats to the country.

Before the President can even start to address these problems, the first critical steps to take are to choose the right people, build a team that should work hard to heal the nation, rid government of the corrupt and incompetent, prosecute the plunderers and economic saboteurs and manage change toward national reconciliation, economic recovery and justice for all.

Hiring and firing

To start clean, President GMA excluded politicians from the highly delicate process of choosing the right people. The crucial task of recruiting the best talents has been entrusted mainly to a search committee headed by Pat Sto. Tomas, former Civil Service chair and a highly respected public administrator, and Dr. Chito Sobrepeña, a brilliant career executive service officer with notable stints in both government and industry.

GMA specified three critical qualifications: integrity, competence and dedication, the qualities that were quite lacking in the previous administration. For we know of a lot of bright civil servants who are consistently corrupt, and of honest bureaucrats who are patently incompetent. The task of attracting good people into the bureaucracy is not an easy one. A few who are both competent and honest are not willing to leave their juicy posts in private firms to venture into the highly risky public service. Those who do not qualify are the ones trying very hard to come in.

Building a team

GMA should recruit people from all over the whole spectrum of the broad coalition that brought about her early ascendancy to power. Pat and Chito should be able to search for the best prospects coming from the sectors of business, labor, church, youth, women, academe, media, military, Muslims and NGO's like Kompil. They should not allow traditional politicians to dirty the selection process.

Another crucial factor is balance, the right mix of those coming from the Right and from the Left, labor and capital, talents from the urban centers and the provinces. GMA should learn from Cory's error of hiring extremely leftist elements, or FVR's strong bias for Makati businessmen and ex-generals, or the usual propensity of Luzon-based heads of state to disregard Visayas and Mindanao, or forgetting the Muslims. FM also had a very pronounced bias for Ilocanos and Iglesia ni Cristo-recommended people.

Pat and Chito should shy away from nominees of religious leaders or proteges of politicians who carry heavy baggage into the administration. They may wish to take a look at career executive service officers (CESO) who, like them, were precisely trained to lead and manage the government. If we want to "professionalize" career service, why don't they tap the people who are CES eligible?

Justice and accountability

GMA has to make sure Erap and his minions are prosecuted for the plunder and economic sabotage committed against the Filipinos. These should in-

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM



Josephus B. Jimenez

clude the administrators of the PNB, SSS and GSIS who allegedly squandered public funds via questionable investments and behest loans. Include tax evaders, smugglers and manipulators of the stock market.

It is not enough to oust a public servant. He has to account for all his expenses and decisions. If there is prima facie evidence of corruption, he should be haled to court and be made to answer for his corruption and irregularities. Reconciliation should be based on justice and justice demands that the guilty should be jailed and the innocent given a clean bill.

Legal defense

The battery of legal luminaries propping the deposed President is trying to raise a cloud of doubt on the legality of President GMA's ascent to the presidency. Even the mayor of San Juan, who was a senior law student, declared on TV that since his father did not resign, GMA is just an acting president, holding power upon the tolerance of the *de jure* President.

No less than the Supreme Court *en banc* promulgated a unanimous ruling that the former President has lost his capacity to govern, and due to the extraordinary situation that brought about a crisis of far-reaching political and socioeconomic implications, the Office of the President was declared vacant. Its basis is the maxim "*salus populi est suprema lex*." That ruling is unprecedented and has no parallel in the annals of our jurisprudence. And since the military, business and the overwhelming majority of Filipinos are giving their assent to such ruling, there is neither a legal nor a constitutional obstacle to GMA's presidency.

The Chief Justice and some of the associate justices were appointed by Erap but they boldly put the interest of the nation over and above personal loyalty. That and the heroic acts of all sectors, the military and NGOs, that joined hands to fulfill the will of God in Edsa and in the impeachment proceedings make us all conclude that the Filipinos are indeed worth dying for. If George Walker Bush assumed the US presidency via a Supreme Court ruling, GMA also took over the leadership within the framework of our Constitution, thanks to Chief Justice Davide and the 15-member tribunal.

Challenges ahead

Meanwhile, the fundamental problems besetting the country such as poverty, social injustice, corruption and the fragmentation among the Filipinos are still posing a grave and imminent danger to the Republic. Erap and his minions may still attempt to regroup and recapture Malacañang either by law or by coup. Thus, we can't stop being vigilant for that is the price of liberty.

ADB cites possible threats to RP recovery

By DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE ASIAN Development Bank, one of the country's biggest multilateral donors, has warned the Philippines of possible internal and external risks that might hamper its recovery efforts.

In an interview, ADB Philippine country director Gunther Hecker said that with confidence in the government now restored following the ouster of former President Estrada through peaceful means, the economy would be able to register at least a 3-percent growth.

"Fortunately, the crisis has ended just in time to avoid any major damage to the economy," Hecker said.

However, Hecker said the country would still have to hurdle the impact of a slowdown in the US economy, which is expected to affect the export performance of emerging markets, and the volatility in the Asian financial markets.

He said the new administration would also have to work under various fiscal constraints brought about by a widening budget gap. He said it was inevitable that the government implements expenditure cutbacks amid budget shortfalls.

"The government will have to resort to belt-tight-

ening," he said.

Hecker also said the government would have to restructure taxes in order to generate more revenues to cover rising expenditures. Property tax, he said, was one area that could generate more revenues for the government.

The ADB executive also said the Philippines should continue implementing reforms that will strengthen the banking system and enact the power deregulation bill, an area where the ADB has been involved through several program loans.

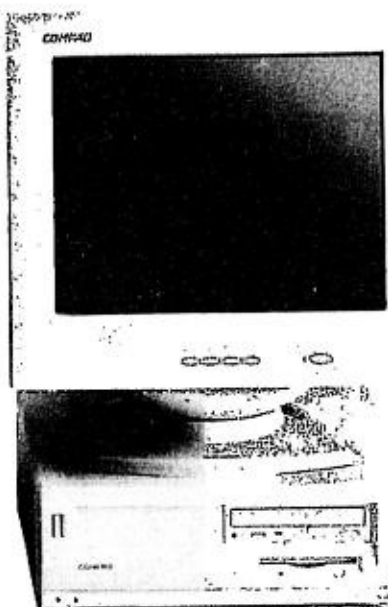
He said the political crisis has wreaked havoc on the economy in terms of the peso depreciation and the downfall in the stock market. He, however, expressed confidence that with the removal of political instability, the economy is now back on track to growth.

In a separate interview, Philippine Stock Exchange non-broker governor Margarito Teves, a former congressman and president of Land Bank of the Philippines, also said the most immediate challenge to the new administration was the government's ballooning budget deficits.

"If the new administration would be able to put in place a transparent and efficient tax system, then maybe there will be some incentives for taxpayers to pay," he said.

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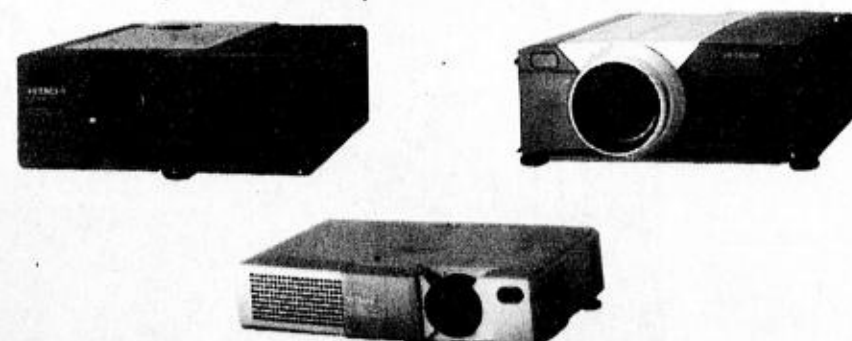
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Gov't to raise growth targets for 2001

THE PHILIPPINE economy may grow faster than forecast this year following the expected return of investor confidence under President Macapagal-Arroyo, her newly appointed economic planning secretary said.

Dante Canlas said the government may adjust its growth target for 2001 gross domestic product from the original 3 percent and 3.5

percent to between 4 percent and 4.5 percent.

Canlas, a former economics professor at the University of the Philippines, said improved investor sentiment justified higher targets. Since former President Joseph Estrada was forced from office on Saturday following a civilian-military uprising, the peso—which fell to record lows last week—has recovered,

while the country's main stock index has gained 17 percent.

"There's scope for raising the (growth) projections," Canlas said in a phone interview, adding that he will meet next week with Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo and Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin to discuss new targets.

Former economic planning secretary Felipe Medalla said the

economy probably grew by about 4 percent last year.

Five economists polled by Bloomberg News, on the other hand, gave a lower forecast for fourth quarter growth of 3.5 percent, slowing from the third quarter's 4.8 percent, and a full-year estimate of 3.8 percent.

"In the last quarter, there was some slowdown as a result of the political uncertainty," Canlas said.

"Now that it's over, we could upgrade our projections for the investment side."

A number of companies have indicated they are reviving investment plans put on hold since corruption allegations against Estrada first surfaced in October.

JG Summit Holdings Inc. said earlier this week it will go ahead with plans to acquire 14 Boeing Co. jets

costing \$518 million for its Cebu Pacific Air unit and build a \$200 million mobile-phone network.

More companies may review their investment plans if interest rates continue to slide. The central bank decided today to reduce key interest rates by another half a percentage point, bringing total cuts since December to 3 percentage points.

Bloomberg

Mindanao seen as E-services center of RP

DAVAO CITY—Government and business leaders are promoting Mindanao as a center for E-services in the country and Southeast Asia.

The Mindanao Business Council (MBC) has laid down plans to develop the information and communication technology (ICT) industry that would make possible the establishment of a high-tech electronic complex and buildings and boost the e-service potentials of the island.

E-services are those that can be done locally and transmitted electronically to clients within the country and abroad.

Joji Ilagan-Bian, MBC chair, said that based on the council's consultation with the Department of Science and Technology, Mindanao can enjoy a niche in E-service projects, like the production of animation materials and the transcription of medical and legal notes and call centers for transport and telecommunication companies.

"We want to explore other economic potentials in Mindanao. It's about time that we develop our ICT fast and maximize the wonders of information technology to boost our economic potentials," Bian said.

The council earlier announced the holding of the first Mindanao Information Technology Congress on Feb. 8-9 in Davao City. The meeting aims to assess the needs and gaps of the ICT in Mindanao and craft plans to boost the island's position as a major IT site in the country.

It is also an important step in realizing the MBC's bid to develop the proposed site of the E-service center in Mindanao, Bian said.

Science Assistant Secretary Toby Melissa Monsod said it would be fitting to develop the center in Mindanao as no other area in the country has been developed for E-service.

But Monsod said that for an E-service venture to flourish, the island should first identify an area where it can develop the complex or buildings that will become the main infrastructure for ICT ventures.

He said the lack of ICT-friendly infrastructure facilities was a drawback in the full development of Mindanao's E-service potential.

She said bringing down the cost of the development of bandwidths and other ICT infrastructure is a concern that the DOST is still trying to address.

But Monsod said the DOST is now working with the private sector in Mindanao to develop the necessary infrastructure requirements for E-services ventures. *Jewel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

GOINGS-ON

WTO resource center

TO FACILITATE the dissemination of information on the World Trade Organization, a WTO resource center will be established at the PTTC. The proposed center will make available to the public basic facts on WTO, including a database of organizations and individuals which can be consulted on WTO matters.

A recent survey on the business sector's awareness on the WTO showed that a number of individuals were not knowledgeable on WTO agreements and issues.

Subjects found relevant to their respective businesses include the General Implications of the World Trading System (48 percent), Implications on the Philippine Business Community (46 percent), Technical, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards and Regulations (42 percent) and E-commerce (40 percent).

Meridian targets SMEs

MERIDIAN Telekoms, the first Internet telecommunications company in the Philippines that offers broadband wireless data connectivity to local businesses, said it would target small and medium enterprises as its priority market this year.

Ricky Peña vice president for sales and marketing, said Meridian intended to fully introduce its services to the SME market which needs to enjoy the advantages of technologically advanced yet economical data superhighway.

SMEs have remained largely unserved by traditional telecom companies, thus, Meridian believes they are a viable and ready market for high-speed Internet and data services.

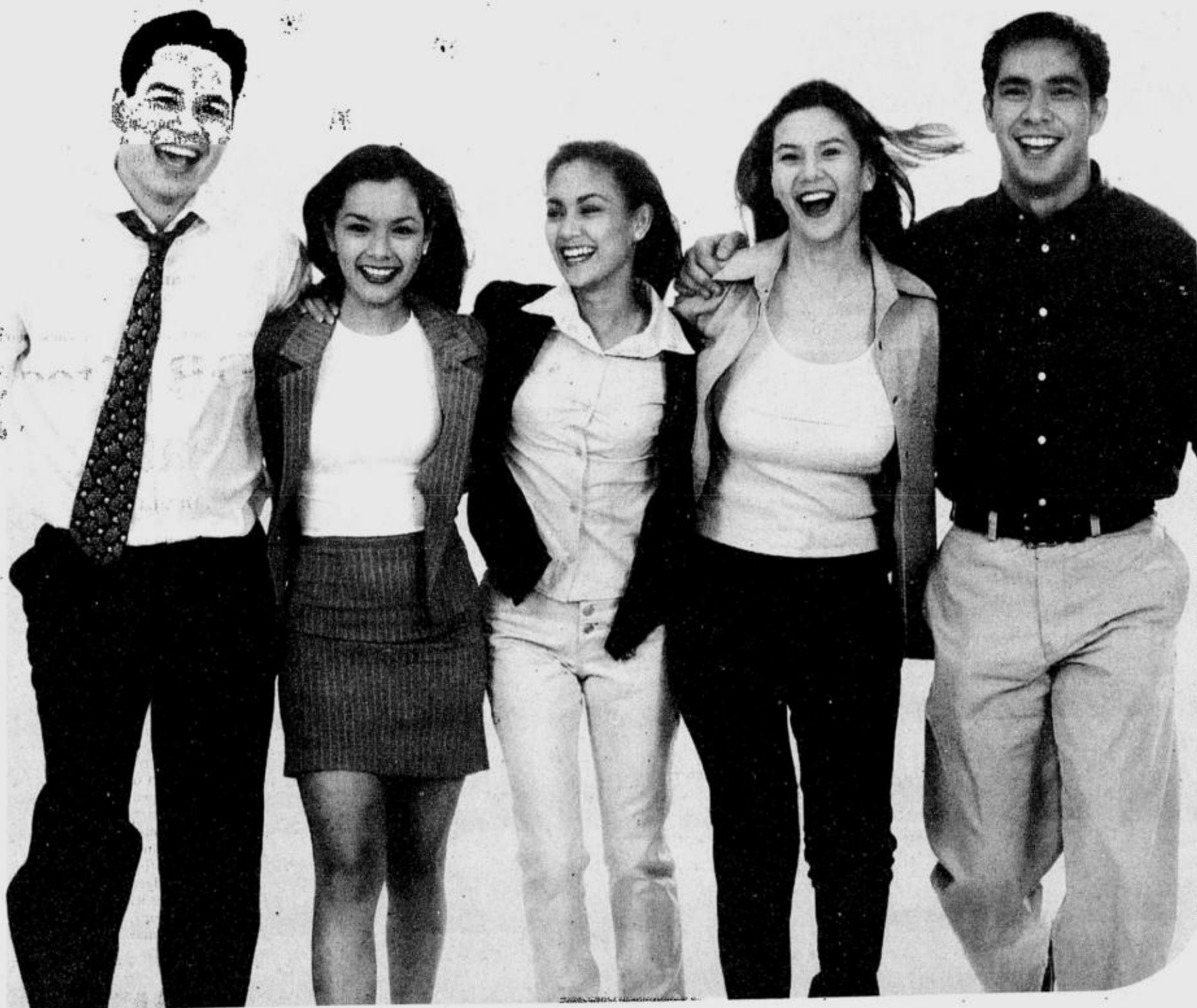
Since the introduction here of its wireless broadband access in August last year, Meridian already covers more than 90 percent of Metro Manila and Cebu City.

Western Visayas agri center

THE NEWLY established Agribusiness Center for Western Visayas (ACWV) Foundation Inc. will start its P885 million worth of investment projects for the year with a hog contract growing project. The contract growing project, valued at P750 million, falls under the Nueva Swine Valley's (NSV) Alagaan Pangkabuhayan Program.

The program involves the fattening of piglets provided by Nueva Swine Valley. The initial implementation area is Dumangas in Iloilo which will be followed by Aklan and Antique. To date, 24 agrarian reform communities have already expressed interest in joining the program as growers.

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Republic of the Philippines
CAGAYAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Gonzaga, Cagayan

NOTICE OF SEARCH AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Board of Regents formally and publicly announces that the Cagayan State University (CSU) presidency is now open, interested applicants are hereby advised to apply to the Search Committee for the next CSU Presidency headed by CHED Chairman Ester A. Garcia.

C/o Ms. Eleanor Imbang
Office of Commissioner Mona D. Valisno
Chair, Board of Regents, CSU
DAP Building, San Miguel Avenue,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A holder of a Ph.D. or EdD or any earned doctoral degree in related academic fields;
2. Must have five (5) years relevant managerial and administrative experience;
3. Must be a Filipino citizen.

Applicants shall be required to submit the following:

1. Comprehensive resumé
2. Vision of Cagayan State University
3. List of accomplishments in previous administrative and managerial positions
4. Birth Certificate, NBI, Ombudsman and Police Clearance and disclosure of all administrative and criminal cases.

Applicants are requested to submit five (5) sets of their formal applications and certified supporting documents not later than **March 15, 2001**.

INQUIRER **RiViA** By BONG BARRAMEDA

Na-Onse

Q. A person who has been cheated or duped is described as "na-onse" in Tagalog. Why?

A. It's a graphic pun of the English word *once* ("one time"), pronounced "onse" in Tagalog, and synonymous with "na-isahan" or "na-one time."

Classified Odd. Mohammed Abdel Rahman, 29, leaped to his death from the balcony of his hotel on his wedding night in Cairo, Egypt in 1987 after he discovered that his mother-in-law had tricked him into marrying the uglier of her two daughters. Rahman had entrusted wedding details to his mother-in-law when he was sent out of the country on business shortly before the wedding, and she slipped the other daughter's name onto the dotted line.

For the Record. The four-day Chinese New Year festival begins at the first new moon after the sun enters the constellation of Aquarius. Thus the opening day may fall between January 21 and February 19 of the Gregorian calendar we use. The use of animal symbols is more legend than fact. The story goes that Buddha invited all animals to visit him one New Year's day. He then name the astrological years after the first 12 that came—rat, ox, tiger, rabbit (or hare), dragon, snake, horse, goat (or sheep), monkey, rooster, dog, and pig (or boar).

WORD WATCH

Chopsticks (chap'stiks): pidgin English of the Chinese *k'wai-tsze*, "the quick ones."

(PDI - Jan. 26, 2001)



PNOC COAL CORPORATION

Building 2, Energy Center, Merrill Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
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(Sgd.) **FERNANDO C. VILLANUEVA**
Chairman
Prequalification, Bidding
and Awards Committee

GNA/EGC/NVM:

(PDI - Jan. 26, 2001)

National Mapping and Resource Information Authority
Coast and Geodetic Survey Department
421 Barraca Street, San Nicolas, 1010 Manila

Competitive Entrance Examination for Probationary Ensigns

Date and Place of Examinations: **February 24, 2001**,
CGSD, NAMRIA at above address.

Qualifications: **Filipino male graduates of civil, geodetic, chemical, electrical, electronics, mechanical, or computer engineering, not more than 29 years old, and must have passed either the Board Examinations or the Civil Service Career Professional Examinations.**

Send applications to above address on or before **February 19, 2001**, or fax to **02-2422090**. For more particulars, call Lcdr. Romeo I. Ho at tel. no. **2422955** (direct) and **2413494** to **97 local 104**.

(PDI - Jan 26 & 28 2001)

SUMMONS - FAMILY LAW

CITATION JUDICIAL
NOTICE TO RESPONDENT: ROWENA GOMEZ
YOU ARE BEING SUED
PETITIONERS NAME IS: JOMAR GOMEZ
CASE NUMBER: FFL057015

You have **30 CALENDAR YEAR DAYS** after this Summons and Petition served on you to file a Response (form 1282) at the court and serve a copy on the petitioner. A letter or phone call will not protect you. If you do not file your Response on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver form. If you want legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately.

NOTICE: The restraining orders on the back are effective against both husband and wife until the petition is dismissed, a judgment is entered or the court makes further orders. These orders are enforceable anywhere in California by any law enforcement officer who has received or seen a copy of them.

1. The name and address of the court is:
SOLANO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
600 UNION AVENUE
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533
2. The name, address, and telephone number of petitioner's attorney, or petitioner without an attorney, is:
JOMAR GOMEZ
105 DEL RIO CIR. UNIT #1
VACAVILLE, CA 95687
(707) 469-8700

Date: December 19, 2000
CHARLES D. RAMSEY
Clerk, by V. Lee, Deputy

(PDI - Jan 26, Feb 2 & 9, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

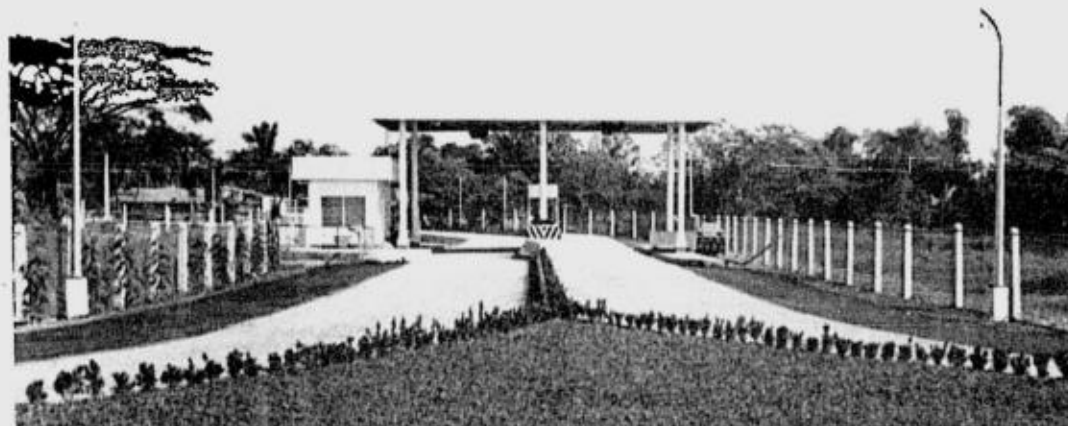
Notice is hereby given to the public that Membership Certificate Number 1836 for 100 units of the Manila Golf & Country Club, Inc. issued in the name of Eastern Shipping Lines, Inc. has been reported lost.

If within one year from the date of the last publication of this notice no contest is presented, said certificate shall be cancelled and in lieu thereof, a new Membership Certificate will be issued.

MANILA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB, INC.
(PDI - Jan. 26, Feb. 2 & 9, 2001)

People, Events & Products

REZ GOMEZ-SINDAC, Editor



THE NEWLY constructed Tabi Lane at Guiguinto, Bulacan which has one entry and one exit lane.

PNCC opens emergency exits at the NLT

TO EASE traffic congestion at the North Luzon Tollway (NLT) in view of the ongoing construction and rehabilitation of the expressway, Philippine National Construction Corporation (PNCC) built temporary emergency entry and exit lanes for the NLT motoring public.

These are Tabi Emergency Entry/Exit Lanes, located northbound at Km. 34+630 between Bocaue and Tabang interchanges; and the Saint

Francis Emergency Entry Lane at Meycauayan, located southbound at Km. 20+990. The Saint Francis Emergency Entry Lane has been opened to the public since the first week of January and presently caters to Meycauayan residents. The Tabi Lane on the other hand is built in cooperation with the Guiguinto local government and is expected to accommodate Balagtas and Bolacan residents.

New GM of Westin Philippine Plaza



CUNNING

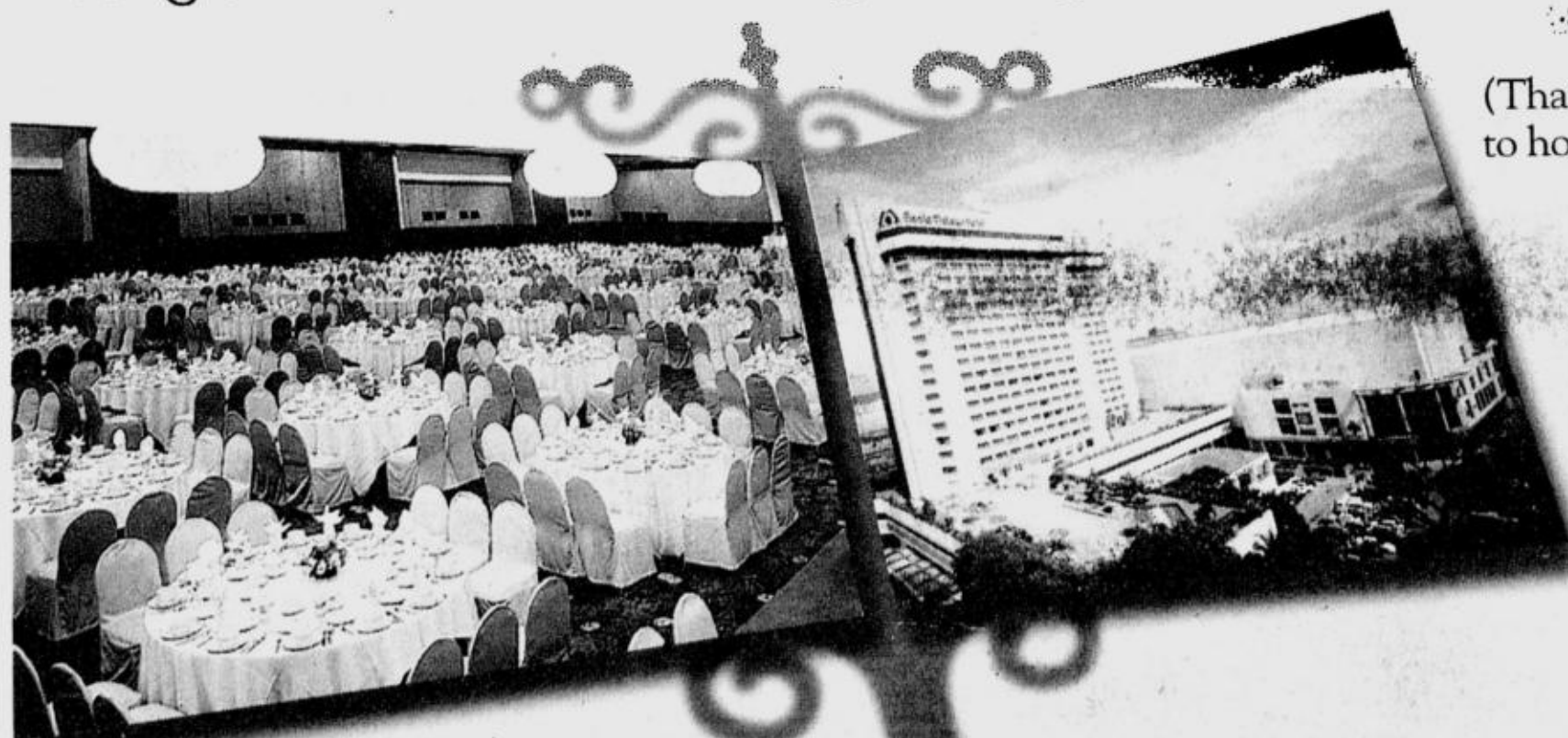
wide chain, Starwood Hotels and Resorts Inc.

THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza announces the appointment of Shane Cunningham as general manager of the 600-room, luxury resort-hotel by the bay. The sprawling 12-acre property, famed for its spectacular lagoon-shaped pool and magnificent views of the sunset, is a proud member of the prestigious New York based world-

A seasoned international hotelier, Cunningham has 15 years of experience in the hospitality industry, and most recently served as general manager at the Senggigi Resort in Lombok, Indonesia. Prior to that, he was director of rooms at Sheraton Bali Resorts.

Under his leadership, his direction for The Westin Philippine Plaza is to continue its renowned commitment to product and operational excellence. His professional management style is pragmatic and consultative with the staff, believing that The Westin has a good reputation and he does not want to change it. He wants people to come and say, "There's something different at The Westin—I can't put my finger on it, it just feels better."

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Greenspan words eyed for rate, tax cut hints

WASHINGTON—It's been a while since Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan has made a trip to Capitol Hill, and when he ventures back there, his testimony will be even more closely watched than usual.

Greenspan's eagerly anticipated appearance before the Senate budget committee comes just five days before the Fed's interest rate-setting Federal Open Market Committee meets to discuss how big a rate cut the slowing US economy needs to keep a more than decade-old expansion alive.

And it comes in the midst of a growing debate about how big a tax cut the economy really can stomach—an issue championed by the new Bush administration which says massive tax relief is a crucial economic stimulus and a boon to overtaxed consumers.

On both questions, financial markets and Washington's new policy elite are desperate for fresh clues from the man who effectively controls US monetary policy and, by extension, has a huge stake in how US fiscal policy is shaped.

The Fed chair has long been critical of plans to use huge pro-

jected government surpluses to fund tax cuts, arguing the money would be better used to pay down the nation's debt.

But amid growing political momentum in Washington for tax cuts—prompted by President George W. Bush's plans to cut taxes by \$1.6 trillion over the next decade—he will find it tough to reject the idea altogether, analysts said.

"Although Greenspan is very likely eventually to reach an accommodation with the White House on tax cuts, it is probably too early for a broad endorsement of cutting taxes," political advisory firm ISI Group told its clients on Wednesday.

But even a partial embrace of Bush's plans would raise eyebrows in Washington, where policymakers know very well the 74-year-old central banker does not shift his opinions too often or too easily. They just carry too much weight.

Bush has repeatedly referred to the slowing US economy—hurt by rising energy prices, sagging consumer confidence and falling business investment—as an argument for tax cuts.

Reuters

POVERTY REDUCTION

WB wants better safety nets

WASHINGTON—Improving social safety nets through permanent public work programs and better access to health care, education and small loans can permanently reduce poverty, a new World Bank report said on Wednesday.

The Washington-based lender unveiled a new strategy aimed at tackling poverty, dubbed "Social Protection."

Recent crises in Asia and elsewhere have shown that while countries can make rapid progress in alleviating poverty during periods of strong growth, many people slide back into poverty when crises hit. This is because of inadequate social protections in place to help them get

back on their feet.

The World Bank says many developing nations view safety nets as measures of last resort to be shelved once crisis passes.

The Bank's new strategy aims to help countries develop and maintain permanent safety nets to ensure that progress on poverty is not entirely undone with every new crisis.

The Bank noted that once crisis hits it becomes very difficult for governments to address social problems, meaning that putting safety nets in place before problems happen is vital if a permanent dent in poverty is to be made.

"The debt crisis of the 1980s in Latin America, and then the recent

East Asia crisis, have shown just how quickly people's lives are turned upside down by steep recession, and how the poor suffer the most during these times," said Eduardo Doryan, World Bank vice president for Human Development.

"Social safety nets are vital to catch people who lose their jobs or become hungry or sick," he said. "But a system that solely concentrates on helping poor people deal with a crisis once it happens runs the risk of keeping them in a poverty trap by not providing any opportunities."

Among the new types of social protection the bank proposed in the report was wider use of microfinance to help the poor access capital to

improve farms and build businesses.

The new strategy will find the Bank pushing governments to provide traditional insurance programs for unemployment, old age, work injury, disability, widowhood and sickness.

The Bank hopes to formulate its policies in conjunction with local governments and the private sector to best assess the needs in any given country.

Those needs could vary from improving access to basic medical care, or clean drinking water, or changing laws so women can inherit farms when their husbands die—something not currently allowed in many countries.

Reuters

CEO confidence in US economy at 20-year low

NEW YORK—Confidence in the US economy during the fourth quarter of last year among the nation's top executives plunged to its lowest level in more than 20 years, and their short-term outlook remains pessimistic, a new survey showed on Wednesday.

The Conference Board's "Measure of Business Confidence" survey, which measures corporate chief-tain attitudes about the overall US economy and their respective indus-

tries, dropped 16 points from the third quarter to a reading of 31.

This is the lowest level of confidence recorded by the influential private economic research firm since the second quarter of 1980, when the reading was 29.

Readings of more than 50 points reflect more positive than negative responses to the survey questions, the firm said.

According to the results, 85 per-

cent of business leaders felt economic conditions were worse today than six months ago, compared with fewer than 3 percent who felt conditions over the same period were better.

In the third quarter, just 29 percent felt conditions were worse while 15 percent said they were better, the statement said.

"The recent plunge in business confidence is yet another indication that a slower pace of economic

growth will prevail in early 2001," Lynn Franco, director of the Conference Board's Consumer Research Center, said in a statement.

"But there is little evidence to suggest we are on the verge of a recession," she said.

In the short-term outlook, 65 percent of CEOs "expect conditions to worsen in the coming months," compared with 8 percent who see conditions improving.

Reuters

Celebrate your reunion with nature

BAY GARDENS



The greens refresh you in their abundance. The sunset warms you with its beauty. The bay breeze soothes. This is life. Not for a few days in a far away place. But for the rest of your days in a place you'll soon call home.

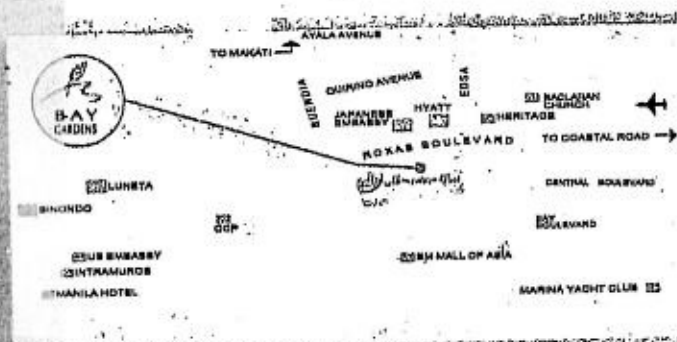
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OBITUARIES

Rev. Fr. Luis G. Hechanova C.Ss.R.

Provincial Superior, Redemptorist Congregation

Visayas - Mindanao

Jan. 24, 1940 - Jan. 25, 2001

Returned to our Father's House at the age of 61. His brothers & sister, Jose Ma. (+) & Charito; Ramon & Vicky; Rafael & Mely; Fenny (+) & Chits; Cecil & Mila; Manuel Jr. & Monina; Carmeling & Nardo; Antonio & Nadja, nephews, nieces, grandnephews, grandnieces, cousins, and other relatives request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will be at the Redemptorist Church in Baclaran until Saturday night, Jan. 27.

After which his body will be flown on Sunday to the Redemptorist Church in Cebu City.

On Wednesday, Jan. 31, his remains will be flown to St. Clements Redemptorist Church in Iloilo City.

Interment will be on Saturday, Feb. 3, at the Grand Plains Subdivision after the requiem mass.

Masses will be said at 7:30p.m., Jan. 25-27, 2001 at the Redemptorist Church in Baclaran.

Forever in our Hearts
On the Second Death Anniversary
of our beloved



**MARIANO MEDINACELI
 MELENDRES, JR.**
 of Pasig City

*Who peacefully joined our Heavenly Father
 on January 27, 1999 at the age of 83.*

A Holy Mass will be offered tomorrow, January 27, 2001 at the Immaculate Conception Church at 6:00 a.m. and at the Sta. Clara de Montefalco Church at 7:00 p.m.

His family: sister **Leticia**; wife **Victoria Arciaga**; sons **Carlos, Manuel, Mariano III, Fernando** and **Noemi**; daughters **Vicky, Alice, Juliet** and **Noemi** request the readers to remember our beloved Mariano in their prayers.

Our beloved sister

CORAZON MAGLALANG YUMANG
 of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Peacefully joined her Creator on January 21, 2001 at the age of 48.

Her loving husband **CRIS**; children, parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to join us in our prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will be today, January 26 at Edmonton, Canada.
 Mass will be offered at the Holy Child Parish, BNS, Fort Bonifacio, Makati on Saturday, January 27 at 6:30 PM.

We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God.

2 Cor. 4:14

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

2 Timothy 4:7

DR. PEDRO C. BRAGANZA, JR.

World War II Veteran and Public Servant

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 24, 2001 at the age of 89.

A loving husband to Purita Ramos Agsalud Braganza.
 A beloved father to his son Nani Braganza and daughter Ella Braganza.

A wonderful Lolo...

To his grandchildren Carlo and Lean.

We, his family and all his relatives and friends request those whose lives have been touched by our beloved *Doc* to pray for the repose of his soul as he is born to Eternal Life.

His remains lie in state at Mt. Carmel Chapel,
 Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish,
 New Manila, Quezon City.

Cremation services will be on Saturday, January 27, 2001, 2:00 PM at the La Funeraria Paz Crematorium after the 12:00 noon Mass at the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish.

Cremains will be brought to the family residence in Alaminos, Pangasinan on Sunday, January 28, 2001. Necrological services will be held at the Alaminos Municipal Hall on Monday, January 29, 2001, 9:00 AM.



An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ① Copy of Death Certificate ② Any identification document (I.D.)

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- Partial payment: get 50% off the amount you pay.

Check payments shall be subject to a 15-day clearing period before the discount can be enjoyed.

Hurry! Avoid the last-minute rush! Start the year right, with the Smart Bayad Diskwento Promo!

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OBITUARIES

I am
the way,
the truth
and
the life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.

John 14:6

Helen Gantioqui Moreno

Peacefully joined her Creator on January 24, 2001.

Her bereaved husband Ruy; children Marga and Henry Aquende, Rodrigo; father Avelino Gantioqui; mother-in-law Hermelinda Moreno Salcedo; brother, sisters and in-laws Pepito and Nory, Aida and Rey Escuadro, Susan and Archie Arabit, Marie and Boy Reyes, Ramon and Clarissa Moreno, Esmeralda and Kearia Yau; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at St. Jerome's Chapel, Alabang Town Center, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 28, 2001 after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

Finally, my Lord and my God, let me be faithful in my commitment and dedication to your will, faithful until the end.

Let "faithfulness" be the summary of my days and my nights.

Let the inscription on my tombstone read... PIETA.

PROSPERO "Piring" RIVERA

of Angeles City

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 22, 2001 at the age of 69.

His bereaved wife Ludy; his loving children Marissa and Lito Hallare, Dotee and Ramon Sanchez, Reden and May, Toyet and Gail, Pocca and Beth, Dowee, Cathy and Curve Kwancharoen, Dixie and Edith.

Grandchildren Danielle Ma, Nina Gabrielle, Bojit and Bonike, Raffie, Noykie and Chookie, Alexi, Ivan and Geo, Nikko and Colo; sisters Tita de Guzman and Gloria; brothers Anding, Bing, and Rene; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at The House of Many Mansions, along McArthur Hi-way (near La Pieta Memorial Park) Angeles City.

On January 27, 2001 at 9:00 a.m., there will be a funeral Mass at the Carmelite Monastery, Angeles City.

Interment will be at the La Pieta Memorial Park.

JUAN P. PEDRO

Former President of AGAP
(Association of Government
Accountant of the
Philippines)

Peacefully joined our Creator
on January 24, 2001
at the age of 93.

His remains lie in state at
Loyola Memorial Chapel,
Guadalupe, Makati City.

Elenita Lazaro Odicta

of Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija
and Bustos, Bulacan

Presently lies at Ilagan Funeral Homes,
Cabanatuan. And it will be transferred to Bustos
Church on Saturday, January 27, 2001.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 28,
2001 at 2:00 p.m. at Bustos Catholic Cemetery.

FLORENCIA G. LIM

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 24, 2001 at the age of 82.

Her loving husband LORENZO SR.; children LORENZO JR.,
and JUDY, MANUEL and CORAZON, ELIZABETH and
CHARLIE, CARMELITA and JOSE, ARSENIO and IRENE, and
GEORGE and LUCILLE; grandchildren and other relatives request
the pious readers to offer prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta
Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

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BUSINESSFriday

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

PERMISSION MARKETING

Forming long-term consumer relations

BY DENNIS M. ARROYO

YOU'RE watching a PBA game, engrossed by the switching lead between the two teams. Then comes the station break, and the images shift to an intrusive mother repeatedly calling her son in the States. Do you really pay attention to the commercial?

Perhaps the ad got your attention, or perhaps it didn't. But it's clear that the commercial interrupted your viewing activity. This is an example of what is now called "interruption marketing." Its opposite is a new development catching on in the Internet: permission marketing.

Strangers to friends

Permission marketing has worked for such giant companies as American Express, Amazon.com and American Airlines.

Check out the book entitled "Permission Marketing: Turning Strangers into Friends and Friends into Customers." It's by Seth Godin, a former vice president at Yahoo.

Permission marketing is a gradual process running on voluntary discussions, common interests and expand-



ing familiarity. To repeat, it is the direct opposite of what he calls interruption marketing: such advertising interrupts what you were engaged in. An average customer in the US can be exposed to some 3,000 messages every-

day, so how many are really paying attention?

"By talking only to volunteers, permission marketing guarantees that consumers pay more attention to the marketing message," says Godin to write

Melanie Knight. "It serves both customers and marketers in a symbiotic exchange."

Start with a giveaway

Ask your customers first. Over time, note how much involvement they find acceptable.

Thomas Little of Australia.internet.com is more blunt: "The rule is: ask your customers first, and then carefully note what levels of intrusion they will tolerate."

In permission marketing, the company offers some kind of bait. This often comes in the form of a contest or a discount. Thus begins a long-term relationship.

Here is an example of an actual giveaway: "Get 1 FREE CD-ROM and 1 FREE Magazine Subscription (up to a \$150 value)!"

Godin promotes the value of "making people an offer in exchange for something of value. Once they start a relationship with you, discover their needs and then offer them solutions."

Yahoo offers promotions, while American Airlines gives a weekly savings update. Amazon presents anticipated book suggestions relevant to your search.

Permission marketing is not about spam, notes the author.

"They interrupt people with e-mail that's basically stealing people's time."

Permission marketing starts after you interrupt someone with a socially acceptable ad in a magazine or a Web banner."

And it's about expanding your client base, rather than trying to hunt for new markets. As the author puts it, farming is more profitable than hunting.

Make it easy to 'unsubscribe'

One rule of permission marketing applies to e-mailed newsletters. They should make it easy for people to "unsubscribe." That is, customers should have no problem if they want to stop receiving your newsletter if they so choose. In contrast some dotcoms put obstacles to unsubscribing. Some require the disgruntled customer to visit their website and go through an arduous process.

A variant of this is refraining from asking too much information at first.

At least give the guy who registers the option of not filling out too many forms. They can come later.

It is vital to build up trust over time. Never sell their names, and do not surprise your base of contacts.

Godin sees greater value in permission marketing arising from new Web developments. In particular the Internet is opening up a great new field due to the advent of the wire-

less Web.

"Wireless. More bandwidth. More clutter. Permission gets more expensive to get and more important than ever."

Demolishing myths

Finally, the author believes that permission marketing does away with certain myths.

One is that traffic of website hits is the best indicator of success. Not so. If hits are not transformed into sales, it's a whole useless effort.

A second myth is that search engines are the central factor to getting Web traffic. Rather, there should be a process that stimulates traffic without depending on the random visits generated by search engines.

A third myth is that the winning site should be a total online experience. How many can really afford all those bells and whistles?

A fourth myth is that anonymity on the Net is a good thing. Godin holds that dotcoms fail when they turn to this. Permission marketing works by encouraging visitors to remove their masks.

Put simply, permission marketing works because it's about the gradual courtship of the customer. It's great to have long-term steady relationships.

(Comments to <dmarrayo@hotmail.com>)

Public relations shifting to reputation management

BY GAVIN ANDERSON

THE 21ST-CENTURY corporation will be predicated on constant change, not stability; organized around networks, not rigid hierarchies; based on shifting partnerships and alliances, not self-sufficiency.

As BusinessWeek recently pointed out, "the new corporation will not have a pyramid organizational chart, but be more like a web—an intricately woven form that links employees, customers, freelancers, partners, and suppliers in various collaborations."

In this much looser business environment, control gives way to persuasion and reputation will be paramount. We, as PR people, will be in strong demand.

Reputation management is our business—although when I hear so many others talk about the importance of brand—I know we have competition. Of course, a company's reputation has always been important but in times past even if that reputation was lacking, the company could often survive. In tomorrow's world, that won't happen. Globalization is bringing fierce competition; capital markets have become ruthlessly efficient; consumers are more and more demanding and attracting top people is impossible if you don't have the right "rap."

Management policies, actions and judgements make reputations. Our job is to help management see and make those choices as much as it is to convey them.

So, if our job is reputation management, are we up to the challenges that are required of us tomorrow? The challenges that are being brought about by rising prosperity; technological innovation; globalization, new business structures, and environments are all coming at breakneck speed. I believe most of us are, but that doesn't mean we don't have to improve or that we are the only ones who will seek to guide companies in this era of change.

Great strides

I don't need to tell you that this profession has made great strides in the last decade or two. Look at the salaries top corporate communications advisers are now commanding; the fees paid to consulting firms; the seat at the operating committee of large companies occupied by the public relations director. Progress for sure and this is true in leading companies abroad as well. But there are about 36,000 public quoted companies worldwide and only in a fraction does the public relations director have the kind of influence and position I have described here. But all of these, public as well as the larger number of privately owned companies are facing the very challenges I mentioned earlier and all of them need advice.

I began my remarks with the assertion that we have a greater uniformity of competence in this business around the world than before. But I believe that this

competence is more in the day-to-day communications skills than it is as analysts of societal change. The directors of public relations that are occupying those top jobs as advisers to senior management have the requisite communications skills, but it is only part of why they have advanced. They occupy these positions because they can see the bigger picture and they have a finger on the pulse of societal change. They know what their companies need to position themselves for the new economy and are active in bringing that around. Their prime job is to make sure management adopt policies and practices that are not only acceptable, but also valuable, and then to communicate them.

In their recent book, "Clients for Life: How Great Professionals Develop Breakthrough Relationships," authors Sheth and Sobel define experts as those engaged to carry out projects while advisors are those views are sought on broad matters of strategic importance.

People who remain plain vanilla, experts will end up being relegated to that role, say the authors, while those who understand corporate strategy, industries, organizational structure, society can elevate themselves to a much broader role as an advisor to management. My worry is that we have plenty of people who have the technical skills to handle the communications part, the experts if you will, but not enough to be the analyst and adviser.

I use the word worry on purpose. We have a great opportunity in this time of change to really position public relations people as advisers and not just as communicators. If we don't succeed in this we will forever be seen as order-takers.

Second, if we can't steer reputations in the decade ahead, in this period of great change, others certainly will. The demarcation lines between the services offered by professional services firms are fast eroding. It might surprise you to know that accountants, Ernst & Young, have more lawyers in Europe than any European law firm. In several parts of the world, law firms own crisis communications or in some cases, PR firms. Investment banks now routinely provide a number of investor relations services that hitherto were provided by consultancies. Most accounting firms provide M & A advisory services in competition with investment banks; they all have management consulting practices and several provide internal communications consulting. Some are starting to offer other public relations services. Several of the management consulting firms are advising companies on their corporate brand or reputation, an area we regard as our specialty.

(The author is chair of Gavin Anderson and Co. and this paper was presented at the International Public Relations congress, hosted by the International Public Relations Association and the Public Relations Society of America)

Get a brand to build your brand

3M (not the pizza brand) Philippines, recently brought in a new technology which provides companies another tool for advertising and marketing and almost literally, image-building.

3M is the Minnesota-based maker of Scotch tape, Post-it and over 60,000 other products.

Known for its innovation, the firm recently brought in a P20-million equipment, the first in the country. A local firm, Federal Flexi-Sign, bought the machine and 3M provides technical and marketing support.

The new product is the Scotchprint Graphics System and its marketing line is "The brand that builds your brand."

MARKETING STRATEGY

The simplest way to describe the latest product of 3M is to liken these to giant stickers that you can stick in nearly any kind of surface—walls, glasses, cars, buses, trains, ships, airplanes, pavements.

The "sticker" can replicate any graphic design a firm wants to use for any announcement, promotion, or reminder it might have.

"Most Olympics graphics (in Australia) used Scotchprint," says Rowie P. Espiritu, a senior marketing specialist and business team leader of 3M's commercial graphics division.

The life span of Scotchprint is about six months to one year. The firm warrants the graphics against peeling,

fading and cracking. A written warranty is provided against verbal commitment.

In her presentation during the launch of the product last November, Espiritu points out that the Scotchprint Graphics leaves no adhesive residue on the train bodies protecting the paint work (provided the paint work has been properly applied and treated). So it saves cost in terms of labor and re-painting.

Espiritu says in terms of cost, theirs is competitive to other forms of media.

Among the firms who have expressed interest to use the new tool are Coke, Jollibee, BPL, UCPB and Caltex.

Espiritu points out some ATM machines have already used Scotchprint.

Margie Quimpo-Espino



THE NEW technology can be used in nearly all kinds of surfaces and can last up to one year.



Brand is king at 21st-century drug company

LONDON/NEW YORK—Prozac, Viagra, Claritin in the global "hall of fame," a growing number of drugs are vying to take their place alongside brand legends like Coca-Cola and Nike.

Executives in the \$300-billion-a-year drugs industry, seeking to turbocharge their product sales, believe medical brands are the future.

"Pharmaceutical companies have come relatively late to brands," according to Stephen de Looze of Medical Action Communications, a specialist consultancy near London.

"But in today's market there is a commercial imperative to have big brands which command a lot of attention... because the bigger the brand, the faster the time to peak sales."

MAC's clients include US giant Pfizer, the firm responsible for the anti-impotence pill Viagra, as well as

Britain's GlaxoSmithKline and the French group Aventis.

Speed in building sales of a new medicine has never been as important as it is today.

The spiraling cost of developing new drugs—some \$500 million on average, including the cost of failures—coupled with the threat of rapid generic competition as soon as patents expire mean firms must go hell-for-leather to maximize sales.

At the same time, the Internet, lighter advertising regulation in the US and the public's demand for healthcare information are breaking down the traditional relationships between drug makers and doctors.

Patient power

You may still need a prescription to obtain a drug but the 21st century patient—armed with information from the Net and bombarded by direct-to-con-

sumer adverts in the US—has a greater say on what medicine he or she takes than ever before.

Brands are one way to differentiate products that, in practice, may vary little from a number of others.

"Building clinical brands is now the core competency of a drug company," said Andrew Baum, pharmaceuticals industry analyst at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter in London.

"R&D was the driver of value creation in the past. But today pharmaceutical companies are seeking increasingly to out-license early stage R&D to the biotechnology sector."

It is a radical—and somewhat uncomfortable—proposition for the global drugs industry, used to hammering home the message that its *raison d'être* is drug discovery.

But the industry's "downstream" shift is clear enough.

Switzerland's Novartis last July appointed a former PepsiCo executive, Thomas Ebeling, as its head of pharmaceuticals.

And AstraZeneca chief executive Tom McKillop talks of developing "megabrands," rather than blockbusters—the traditional industry term for drugs with potential sales of more than \$1 billion a year.

Prescription medicines will never be the same as fast moving consumer goods, partly because limited patent life means they get cannibalized by generics some 10-15 years after launch. Levi Strauss jeans, by contrast, have been around since the 19th-century California gold rush.

Nonetheless, the global drugs industry already spends more on marketing than on research and development, and analysts expect the trend to continue as mergers unleash new pharmaceutical behemoths with very deep pockets.

Meanwhile, alliances with the biotechnology industry are growing apace.

Merrill Lynch estimates the global biotechnology industry now has more than 350 products in clinical development—and big pharma is competing hard to partner the best.

In return they can offer unprecedented marketing muscle, with the likes of Pfizer, Merck and Co. and GlaxoSmithKline spending up to \$1 billion in promoting a potentially class-leading drug in the first two years of launch.

Direct-to-consumer blitz

The lion's share, in each case, will be earmarked for the United States, the world's richest and fastest-growing market for medicines.

Direct-to-consumer (DTC) advertising is growing exponentially in the US. It totaled \$1.3 billion in the first half of 2000, compared with \$1.8 billion spent

in all of 1999 and about \$1 billion in 1997, according to IMS Health.

The escalating blitz follows a 1997 change in Food and Drug Administration rules that allows drug companies to ballyhoo the benefits of their wares in television advertising.

Merck spent \$94 million in the first half of 2000 in DTC ads for its popular arthritis drug, Vioxx, according to Banc of America Securities analyst Len Yaffe.

Schering-Plough's allergy treatment Claritin held second place at \$65 million, followed by AstraZeneca's heartburn medicine Prilosec at \$60 million and Pfizer's Viagra at \$55 million.

The industry's annual spending on DTC ads will likely soar to \$7 billion by 2005, intensifying brand awareness of prescription and over-the-counter drugs, Yaffe predicts.

Reuters

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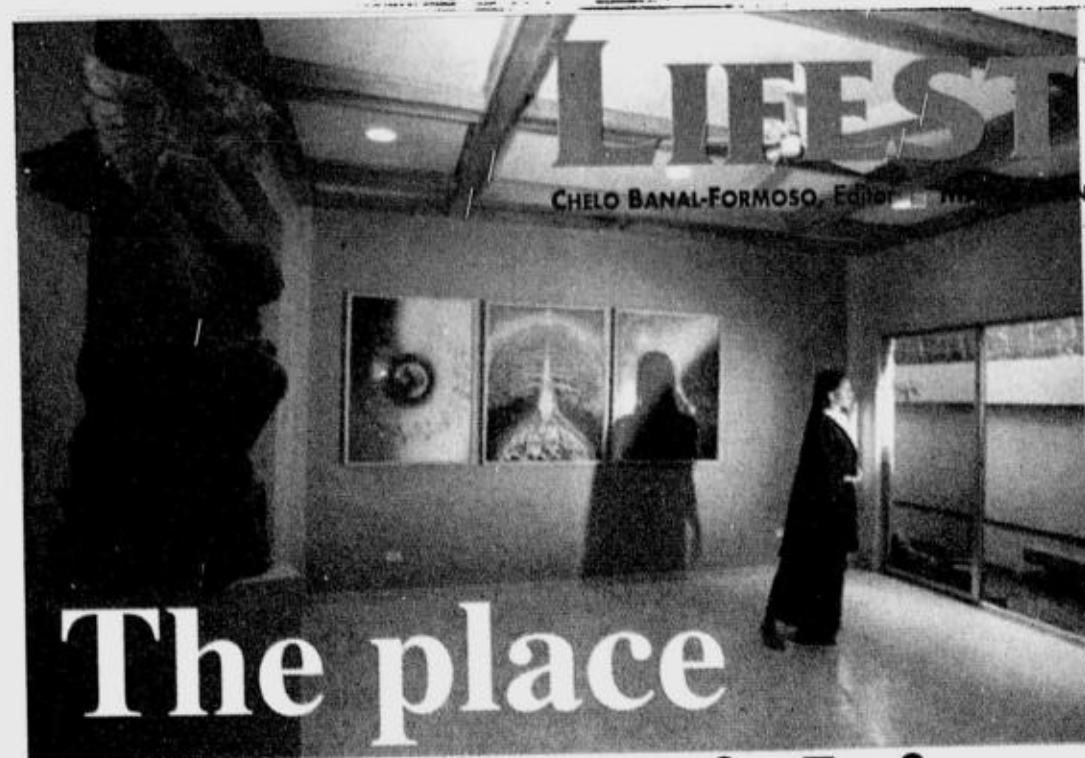
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The place to be is within

PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

URBAN living is blaring with sounds of continuous exertion. The car has become a tyrant and people charge from one task to the next with less time than ever to prepare and recover. The pressure is coupled with uncertainty and tough economic times.

Increasingly, we desire to run away from these tensions that beset us. In reaction, we perceive an emotional call that draws us back toward simplicity. At the core of this sentiment is a power called silence.

Signifying a deep aspect of creation, with overtones of eternity, eminence and the sublime, silence should never be considered as merely nothingness. A composer knows that the pauses between notes are as much a part of the composition as the notes themselves.

We can use this analogy to our minds. If we are self-aware and watch our thoughts for a few minutes, we can become conscious of the spaces between and behind each new section of thinking. This is our inner silence.

Noise and worries about the past and the future can be stressful if we let them overcome us. Silence can be stressful when we are junkies to our own distractions and afraid of encountering the inner self, stripped empty of the comforting props of habit. Yet in deep silence, there is a soothing salve for the soul. In tune with the soul's positive qualities, we can almost feel silence cleansing us in a motion of pure sanctity.

Sanctuary

The Inner Space gallery aims to provide a sanctuary to weary and stressed-out souls in the heart of Makati. The place is located in a busy national road, where you will hear cars honking and pop music from the neighbors.

But as soon as you enter the grounds, you'll feel the powerful vibes of peace.

The layout is Asian in feeling. Visitors are asked to remove their shoes, then walk through the bare floors to enter a space as solemn as a monastic cell. There is openness in the space plan, which reflects the residents' open hearts and minds.

The design acknowledges the visitor who moves from one perspective to the next, in a garden or a room, having a succession of planned experiences—be it silence, a spiritual chitchat or course in meditation. The simplicity of the place enables visitors to notice details and the spiritual artworks, without any outside stress.

The gallery features a pocket Zen garden that has a deep link with the spirit. It is symbolic of man's search for understanding, of the self and the Supreme—a place for meditation and contentment.

The Zen garden is a harmony of nature and artifice. Its astute combination of a few elements within a color scheme, restricted to neutrals and earth tones, provides a cure to the ever-increasing garbage in the metropolis.

Solitude

The modest garden plot attains Zen elements through the selection of plants, rock, gravel and water features. The Zen garden is a place for solitude. It is a three-dimensional reflection of the inner

THE PLACE/ p.C2



THE ZEN rock garden epitomizes the breakthrough the person has discovered about his or her own place in nature.

THE SIMPLE style brings quiet atmospheric satisfaction. In a peaceful place the visitor can feel deep happiness.

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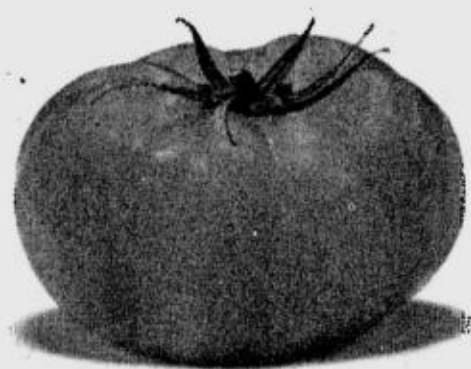
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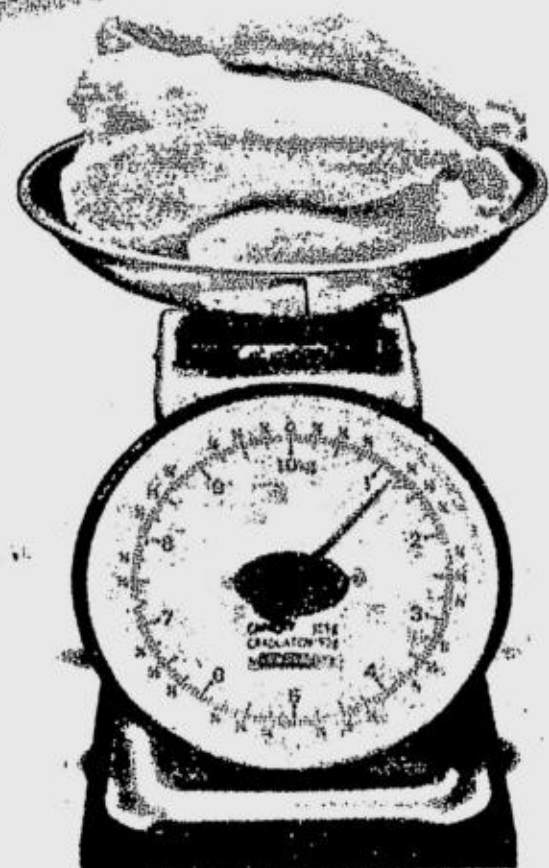
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Shopwise Alabang can be found at the Left Wing of Festival Supermall in Fillinvest, Alabang Zapote Road, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. The new Shopwise Makati can be found on the corner of Pasong Tamo and Vito Cruz Extension. You can also visit our website at www.shopwise.com.ph

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0198 Series of 2001

The place to be is within



THE USE of the curve, as shown in the walls, exemplifies Zen principles of design.

(From page C1)

landscape of the mind.

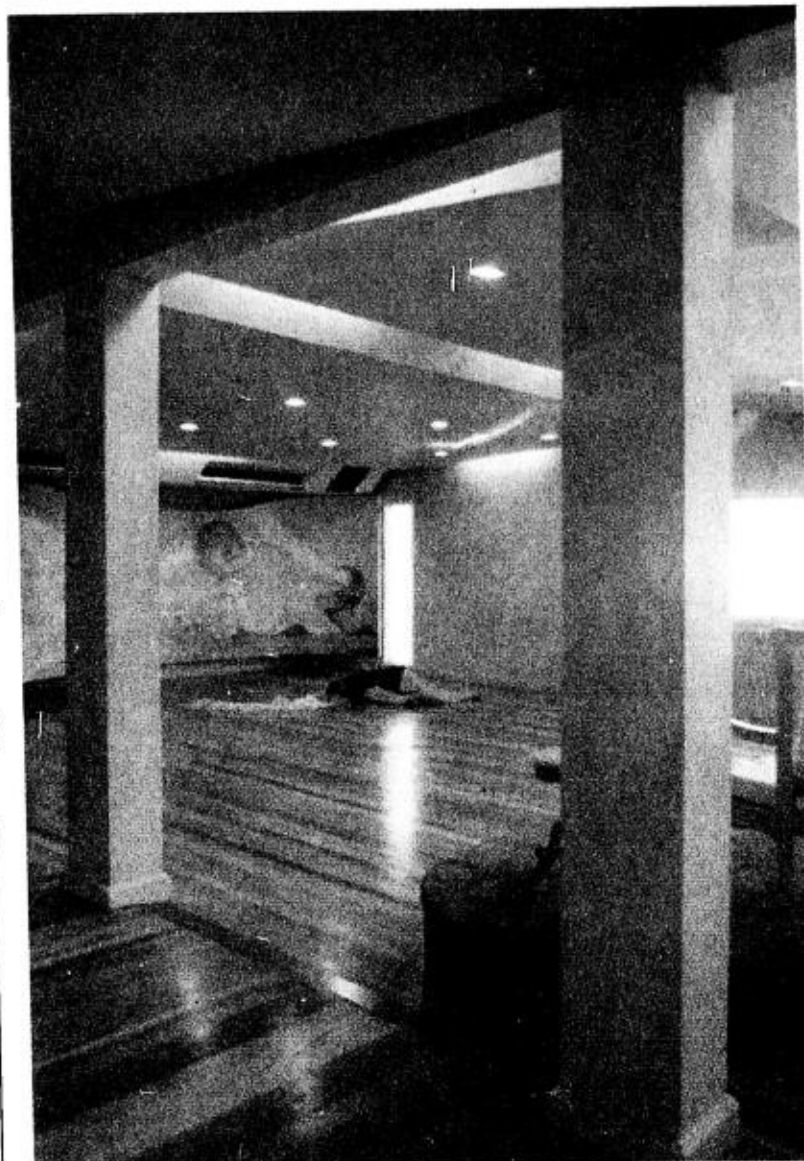
Any visitor can sit on the driftwood bench, and take the time to enjoy the sights and sounds of the world. Although the space is narrow, it still creates a refined delight of the senses, while at the same time presenting a leisurely chance for the gentle meditative play of soul and nature.

The walls of Inner Space are colored in warm colors that aim to bring cheer to dreary souls. In the main hall, a mural catches the essence of the soul sending out love to the Supreme in deft, intuitive strokes.

Inner Space eschews clutter and over-decoration. The furniture is modest and artlessly placed. Objects used decoratively are selected not for ostentation but because they are interesting in themselves.

You can learn one décor tip from this place: If you're in tune with yourself, your surroundings will reflect it.

Inner Space, which is located at 7484 Bagtikan St., San Antonio Village, Makati City, will hold an open house for visitors tomorrow. Call 890-7960.



SPACE is like a river flowing gracefully around the furniture.

CLOTHES BY GIGI EALA FOR B AT HOME

MODEL: CHRISTINE DOWLING

On Time, All The Time (A more reliable way of solving constipation)

Home treatment usually plays the most important long-term role in preventing constipation.

The first step in treating constipation is to understand that normal frequency varies widely, from three bowel movements a day to three a week. People who are constipated may find it difficult and painful to maintain regular bowel movement. Symptoms include small, hard stools every three or four days; dry stools (even if they're passed everyday) that are painful or difficult to eliminate and abdominal pain relieved by a bowel movement. Other symptoms may include feeling bloated, uncomfortable and sluggish.

Home treatment usually plays the most important long-term role in preventing constipation. Here are some helpful tips to consider:

- Dietary and lifestyle improvements can lessen the chances of constipation. A well-balanced diet that includes fiber-rich foods, such as unprocessed bran, whole-grain breads and fresh fruits and vegetables, is recommended.
- Drinking plenty of fluids and exercising regularly will help stimulate intestinal activity. Special exercises may be necessary to tone up abdominal muscles.
- Bowel habits are very important. Sufficient time should be set aside to allow for undisturbed visits to the bathroom. In addition, the urge to have a bowel movement should never be ignored.
- If an underlying disorder is causing constipation, treatment should be directed toward the specific cause. For example, if an underactive thyroid is causing constipation, the doctor may prescribe thyroid hormone replacement therapy.

Knowing this, many of those suffering from constipation rely on natural remedies like taking more fluids and eating fruits like papaya or prunes. While these prove to be effective preventive measures, these remedies may take time to solve constipation once it has set in.

Laxatives, on the other hand are medications that facilitate the passage and elimination of feces from the colon and rectum helping your bowel movements get back on track. Common laxatives may be classified according to their mechanism of action:

- Bulk-forming/Fiber laxatives.** These retain fluid with the laxative, increasing bulk and stimulating propulsion. They increase the volume of feces, making them softer and easier to pass. Bulk-forming laxatives usually need some time before they can work because they need to adapt to the normal excretion cycle of the body.
- Contact laxatives.** These laxatives stimulate the intestinal wall to contract and thus speed up the elimination of feces. Because the feces spend less time in the intestine, less water is reabsorbed into the blood vessels which helps keep the feces soft. Softer feces means easier passing—less pain, more comfort.

Taking contact laxatives such as Dulcolax is a reliable way of relieving constipation. It acts directly on the colon (large intestine) to promote its natural movement thus making it easier to expel stool.

Dulcolax acts within 6-8 hours. One tablet taken at bedtime will produce bowel movement the next morning, allowing you to enjoy your day instead of suffering from that bloated, sluggish feeling you get from being constipated.

Remember, the best way to establish a regular bowel movement cycle is simply to follow a healthy lifestyle and an overall sense of well-being. You can then go on enjoying a more productive lifestyle. On time, all the time—without the wait.

Taking contact laxatives such as Dulcolax is a reliable way of relieving constipation. It acts directly on the colon (large intestine) to promote its natural movement thus making it easier to expel stool. Because Dulcolax acts within 6-8 hours, one tablet taken at bedtime will produce bowel movement the next morning.



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Focus on a flower

NATURE is a virtue in itself: what could be more beautiful, more calming? Through meditation on a natural feature (illustrated, real or imagined), we connect with such beauty in a way that reinforces, by reflection, our own qualities. A real flower can reveal the flower of the spirit.

1. Use an image (or a real flower) as a basis for meditation. How do you bring it to life? What attributes do you give it so that it seems more perfect for you?

2. Concentrate on the completed image. You should be completely focused on the flower, and no other thoughts should enter your mind.

3. What symbolic resonances does the image have for you? How might these qualities reflect aspects of your self?

4. Now consider each different attribute you have given the flower. Contemplate each in terms of how it might correspond to your personality.

5. If the flower has any negative aspects (is one of the petals drying out?), what might this be telling you about yourself? Concentrate on mending the negative, making your self-image wholly positive.

6. Connect with the object in this way until you feel that the beauties you see are a direct reflection of your virtues.



FLOWER arrangement by Rachy Cuna



A.L.O.H.A. Mental Arithmetic is a unique method that makes learning Math fun and easy...at a pace and style that children enjoy!

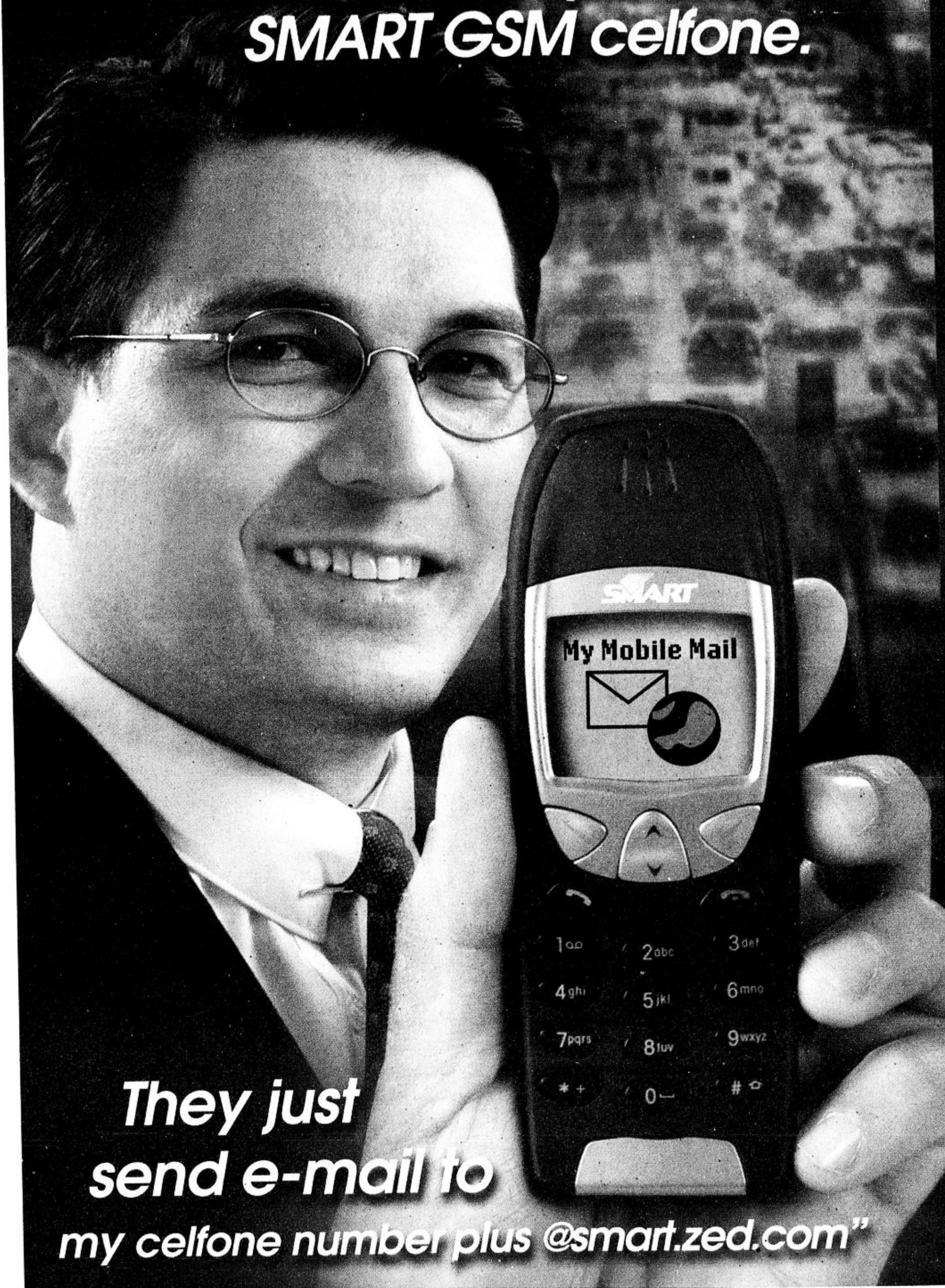
For gradeschoolers, the REGULAR PROGRAM has 4 stages:
Stage 1: Use of the finger theory to maximize mental powers by stimulating both right and left sides of the brain.
Stage 2: Use of the abacus + the finger theory.
Stage 3 & 4: Mental computation through visualization of fingers and abacus beads.

Start your child on his way to a future of mental prowess, self-confidence and personality development. Call the A.L.O.H.A. hotline at Tel. Nos. 244-7041 to 43 or the A.L.O.H.A. center nearest you.

ALOHA

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figures are in.
p by 2021 -ALAN

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Good job,
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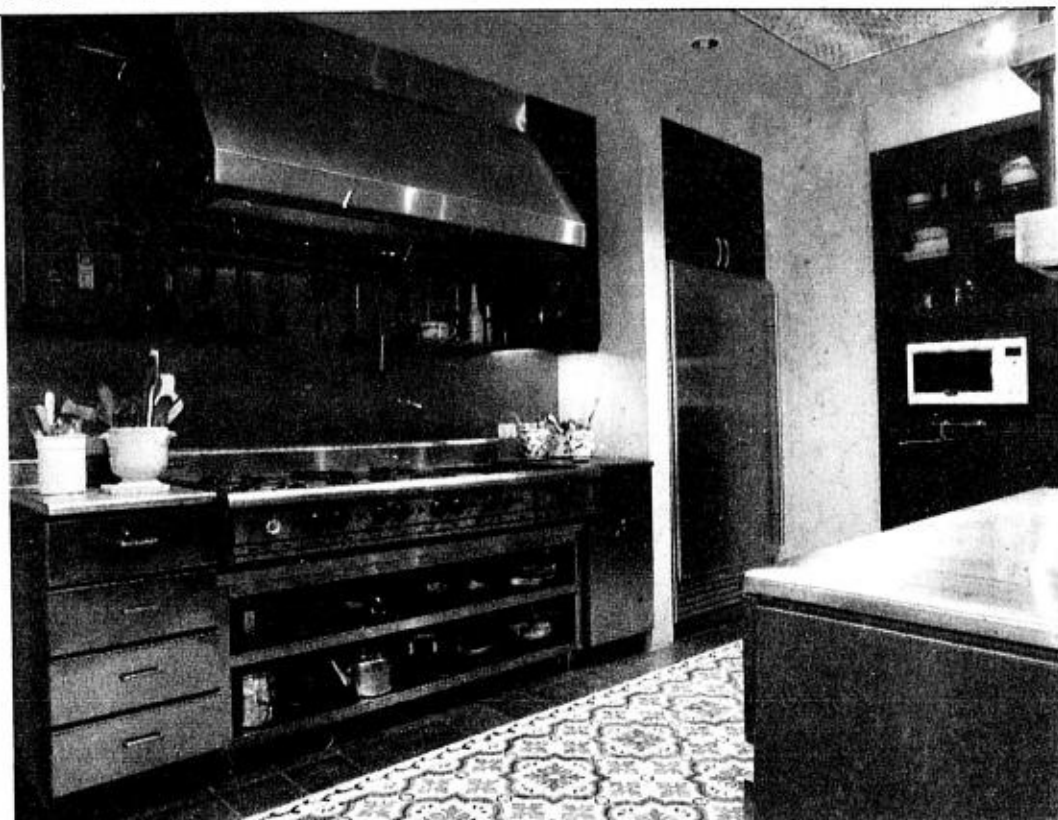
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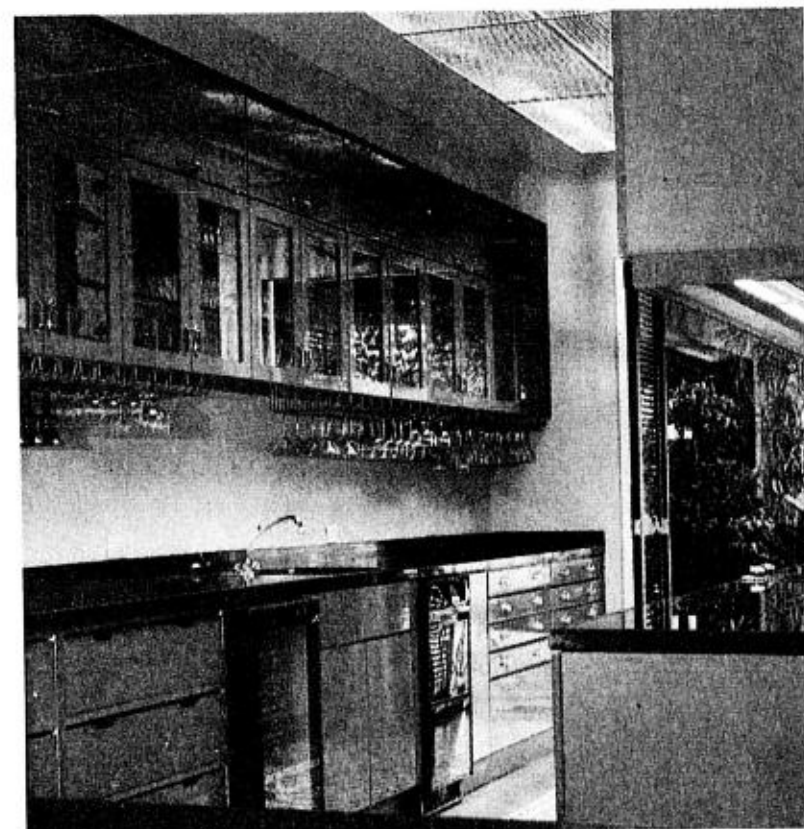
THE REFRIGERATOR door resembles the oak cabinetry in the Zubiri home.

Rafael
Calero
has made
kitchen-making
a key
design
issue

Cooking up the kitchen



ZOBEL kitchen in Makati exudes the boldness of sleek, stainless-steel surfaces mixed with the nautical color scheme and '40s-inspired Machuca tile flooring.



DOOR opens to the patio so the food can be easily transported during functions hosted by the Zobels.

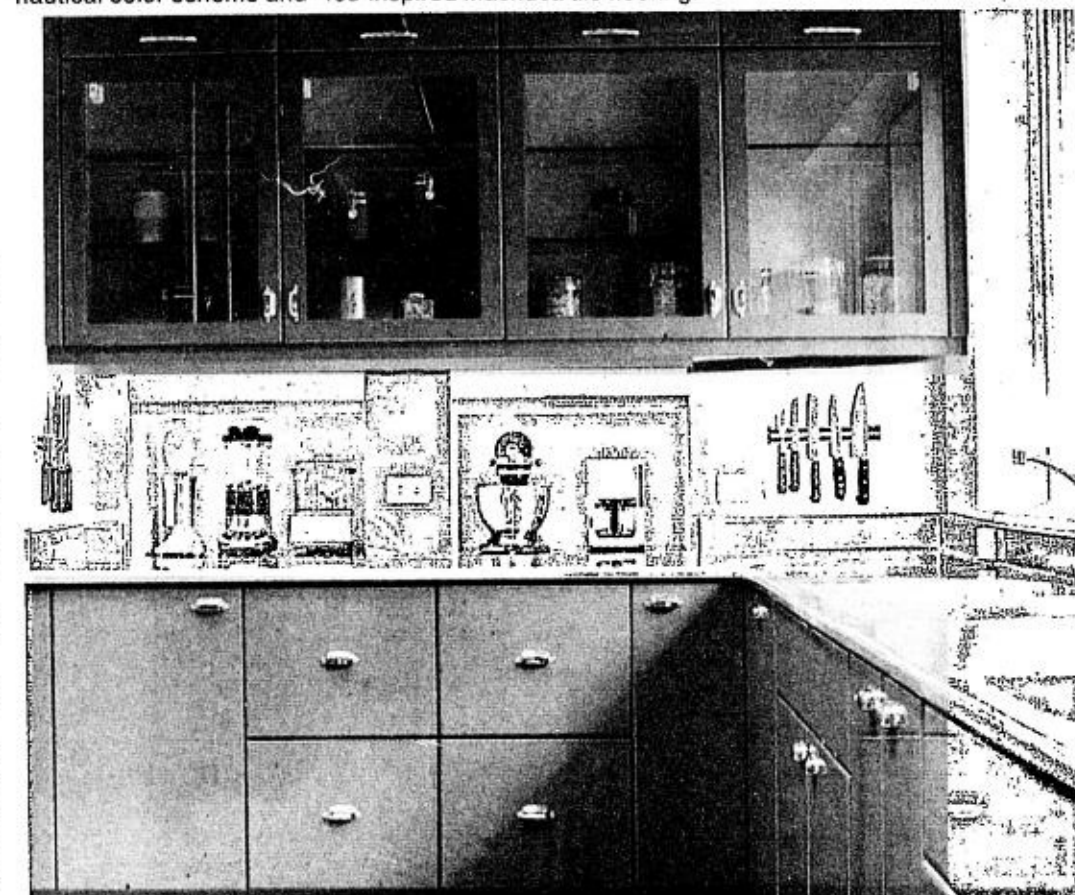
AT THE HEART of the home lies the kitchen where food that nourishes the body and soul is prepared. The kitchen needs to complement the lifestyle of the residents, whether it contains industrial equipment or not.

Although the fundamental rules of kitchen layout are unchanging, kitchen design is not just a matter of making sure that everything is within the cook's reach, worktables are of the right height and surfaces are heat-proof for hot dishes. Because a lot of thought goes into building a kitchen, some architects prefer to work with a specialist.

That's why Rafael Calero of Kitchen Studio has an impressive list of clients who do a lot of entertaining at home. A degree holder in industrial arts, he worked as a contractor in California. After attending seminars held by the National Kitchen and Bath Association, he eventually specialized in kitchen and bathroom remodeling. When Asia was becoming a tiger economy, he returned to his homeland. He saw the potential of setting up the Kitchen Studio.

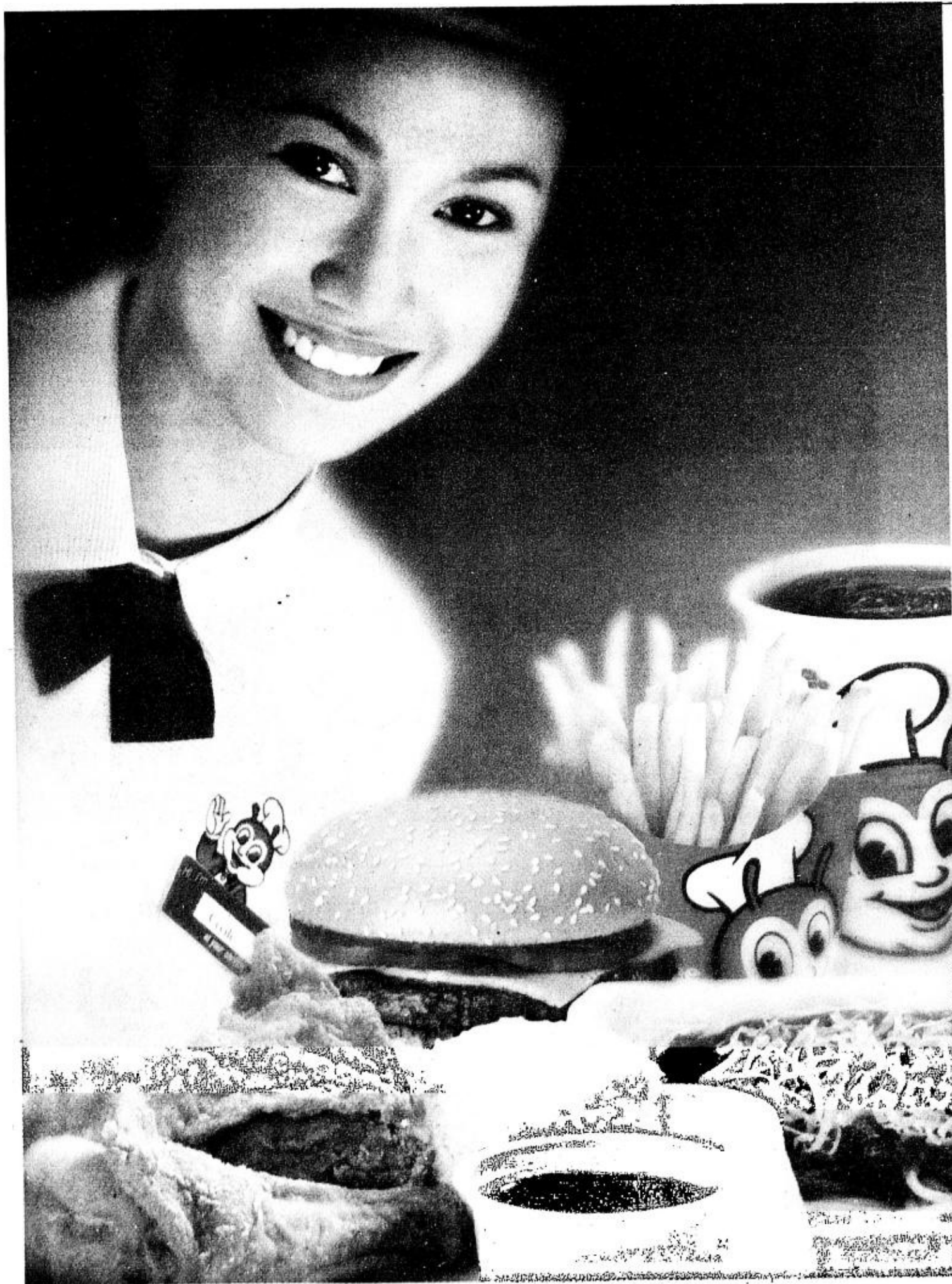
Architects consult Calero and ask him to recommend appliances and to customize cabinets that are made with European technology.

After establishing the equipment that the client needs and where they should be positioned, after determining storage space and work surfaces, he then discusses the look of the kitchen. Some want the no-nonsense approach. Others want high-tech look. Others like the indigenous inspirations or others favor the country style.



COOKING/ p. C7

SHINY surface treatments and glass door cabinets for everything in orderly storage



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Surpassed only by General Electric and Microsoft
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Best Print Ad
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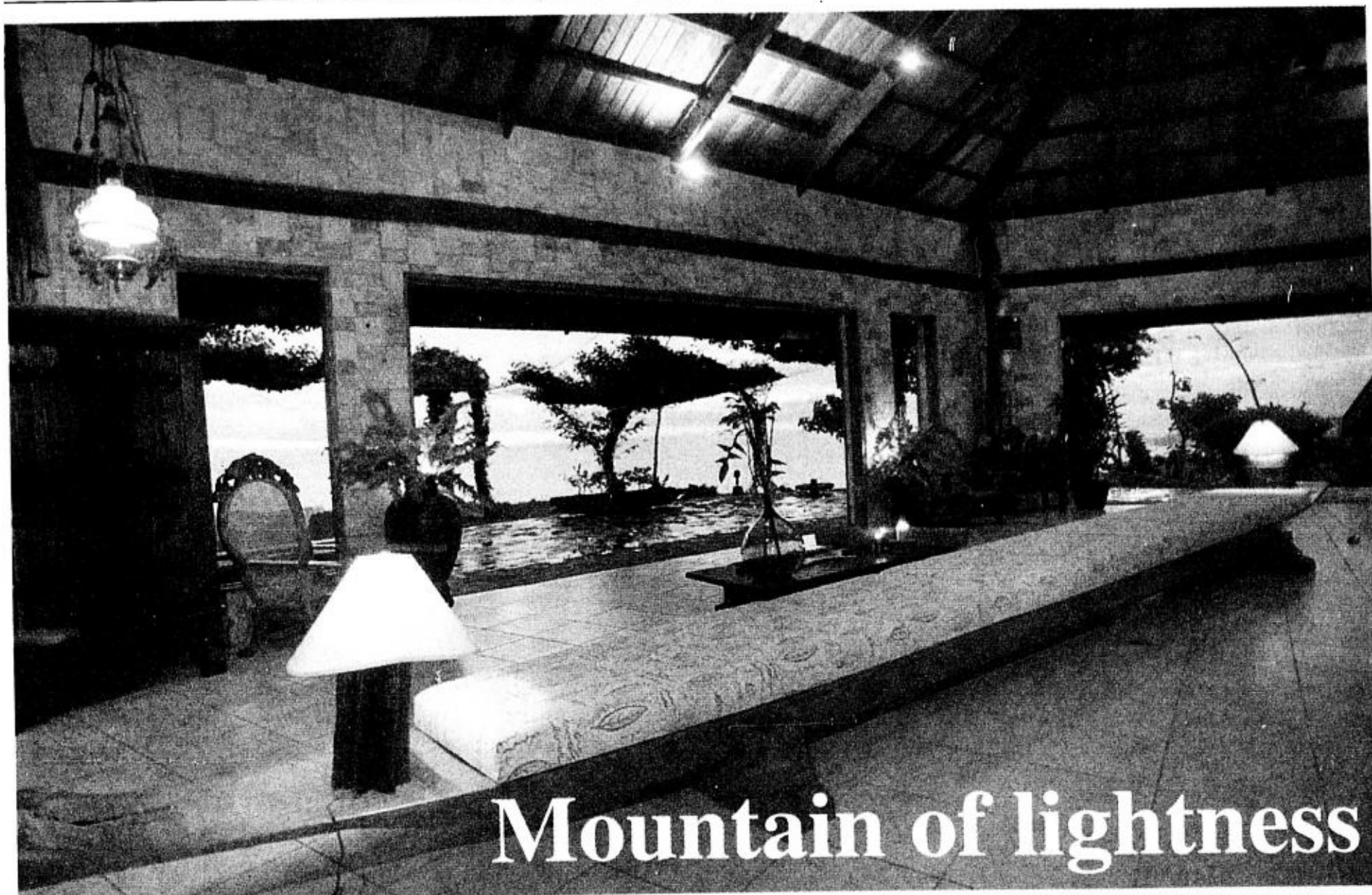
Jollibee's commitment to excellence has only one purpose: to give Filipinos the very best everyday, in the quality of our food, the superiority of our value, and the efficiency of our service.

We are thus overwhelmed with gratitude and pride for having been recognized for our dedication to our goal.

We at Jollibee Foods Corporation thank you for bringing our company and our country great honor with your continued patronage.

Your appreciation of our hard work shall only inspire us to go even further in the pursuit of excellence in everything we do.





Mountain of lightness

OVERSCALING. The 30-ft banca becomes a seater in this pavilion whose materials harmonize with nature such as wood and stone. Expansive openings frame the views.

BY MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ
PHOTOS BY BOBOT MERU

BLUE monks eating pink raisins, pink monks eating blue raisins." The lady of the house waxes poetic as she watches the roseate sunset from balcony that faces the canyon somewhere in Mindanao. She explains

that this excerpt from Jose Garcia Villa's poem is an imagery for the change of day into night and night into day. From the vantage point of the house, the sky turns into dabs of violet, pink, tangerine, gold and lilac just like an Amorsolo canvas. Twelve hours later, the bluish black sky opens up to the sunrise.

Watching the confluence of day and night is the privilege of this couple in their vacation house. In the summer the sun sets in the mountainside. Late in the year, the sun disappears over the sea.

"That's when I realized that the earth really revolves around the sun's axis," she said. Perched on the hills of the Mindanao hinterlands is a businessman's hideaway called Monte Alegre or Happy Mountain. The owner and his wife requested not to even mention the province because the locals would recognize them; and therefore, the retreat would no longer be a secret.

Balinese pavilion

Built on the hilltop, some 1,000 ft above sea level, the bungalow is a typical example of organic architecture. It is designed with the spirit of keeping with the nature of the place. The materials are organic sandstone walls, Mactan stone shell, *ara-al*, river boulders and *molave*. The house combines recycled railway tracks that are used for trusses and lighting sconces and parts of an old bridge are pillars. Italian tiles and antique *ipil* cover the floor. The hexagon shape—yup, all of six sides—takes advantage of maximizing the view. Large openings help harmonize the indoors with the outdoors. Galvanized iron shades are rolled down at night.

The architecture is inspired by the Balinese pavilions with a bridge connecting them to the multilevel sleeping quarters. The main house has a pitched roof. The owner has lived all his life in homes with high ceilings so that air could circulate. The kitchen is hidden in the basement so that the occupants and visitors can enjoy the 360-degree view of the mountainside.

The raised platform, made from *balayong*, segregates the dining area from the living room.

The place is decorated with islands of furnishing and accessories that reflect the owners' penchant for antiques such as sugar crushers, sofas from Bohol, and mementos from their travels. The most important piece in the house is a 30-ft *banca* bought from a closing-out sale. The antique dining table, shaped from a single piece of solid wood, can accommodate 18 diners. It is believed to be the largest round table in the country. Woven baskets are made into lampshades.

Animal visitors

There are other cross-cultural references such as Dutch hurricane lamps, Sung jars, blue and white china, Indian animal carvings and African leather stools. Pinlights dot the ceiling for soft ambience.

Perched in the Mindanao hinterlands is a hideaway where one can see the day turn to night in spectacular array of colors, like Villa's 'blue monks eating pink raisins'



VIEW of the bay from the master's bedroom

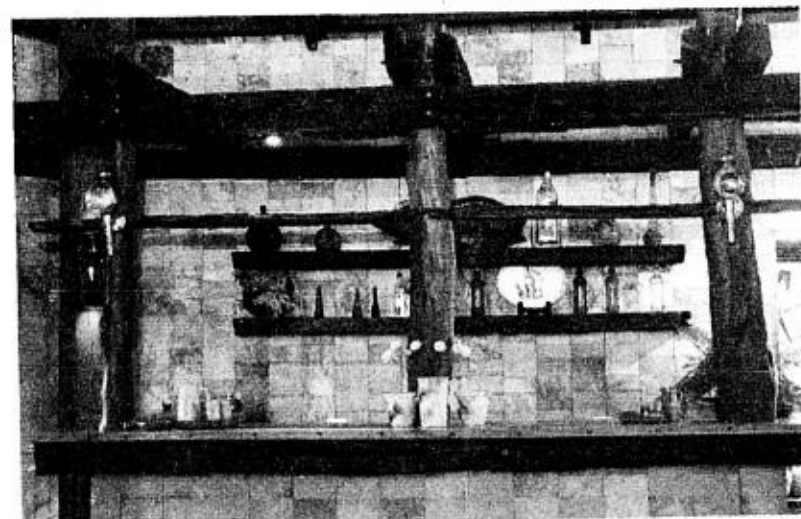


VARIATION of the welcome floral arrangement. A cornucopia of fresh fruits and vegetables decorates the entrance.

Asked why the owners still have air-conditioning when they can get all the fresh air and savor the view of the canyon, they explained that the weather gets extremely humid in the summer. Snakes and monkeys can get inside. Mayas have become regular visitors. At night you can hear the cooing of the owls and the symphony of the crickets. Fireflies provide natural lighting.

To cover the 22-ha property, the owners planted *mansanitas*, yellowbells, fleur de lis, allamandahs and sampaguitas. The scent of *damas de noche* wafts in the evening air. The owners even grow mangoes, upland rice, corn, cacao, *sineguas*, *ponelos* and big guavas. They hope to make Monte Alegre an orchard and nature reserve.

And if you want escape, you'll never be found in this hideaway.



TRAVESIAS are used to construct this trellis and its shelves, set against a sandstone wall finishing.



RAISED platform segregates the dining area from the living area. The plans are pegged not nailed. The flooring inserts of *kamagong* and *molave* make interesting design elements. The lighting fixtures hanging from the tent ceiling are integrated into the indigenous look. The dining table is said to be the largest round antique table in the Philippines.

MATH WASN'T THEIR FAVORITE SUBJECT UNTIL...

A.L.O.H.A.

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ON HIGHER ARITHMETIC
CAME INTO THE PICTURE!

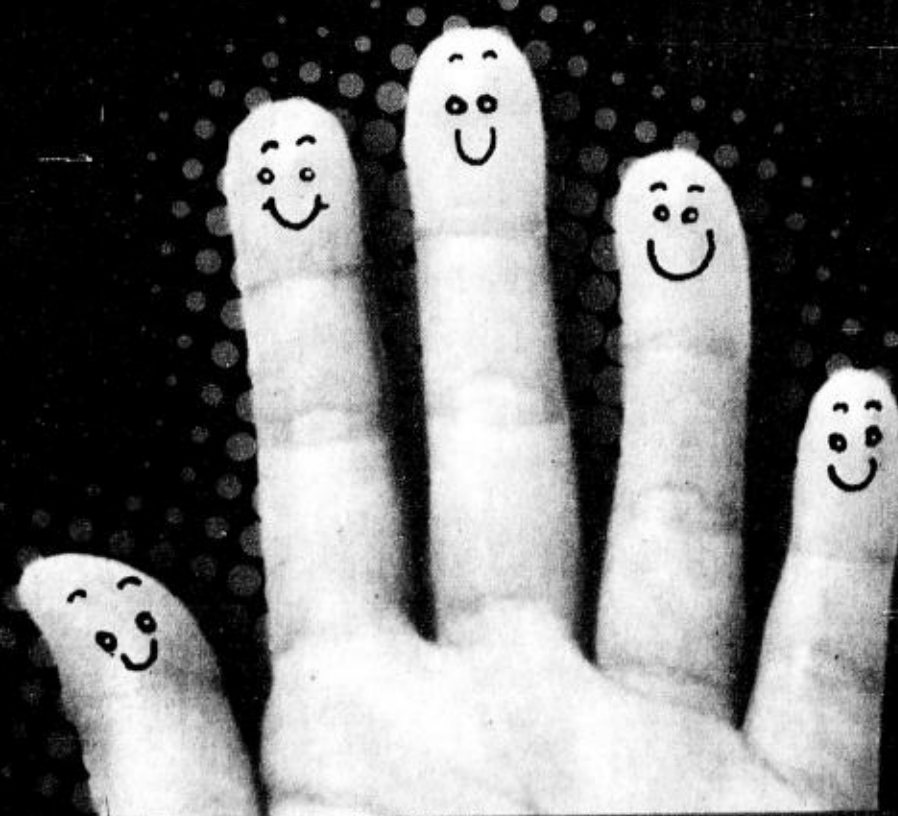
A.L.O.H.A. stands for Alternative Learning On Higher Arithmetic. A.L.O.H.A. mental arithmetic is a unique method that works in stages, and at a style and pace that kids enjoy! At stage 1, children are taught the finger theory to unleash the powers of analysis and visualization by stimulating both right and left sides of the brain. At stage 2, the abacus is used in making calculations, along with the finger theory. At stage 3 and 4, children calculate mentally by visualizing the abacus beads and the fingers.

A.L.O.H.A. managing director for the Philippines Prof. Mer Elenzano thought this method was too good to be true until A.L.O.H.A. founder Dr. Loh invited him to Malaysia to see the method at work. There, he saw 6 and 7 year olds bombarded with mathematical equations one after the

other. To make sure the answers were not scripted, Mr. Elenzano made his own sets of equations, which the children were able to answer with amazing speed and accuracy! From 14 centers in 1998, there are now over 50 centers in the Philippines. The company also has joint ventures with 15 schools, where Mental Math has become as popular as Taekwondo, football and basketball.

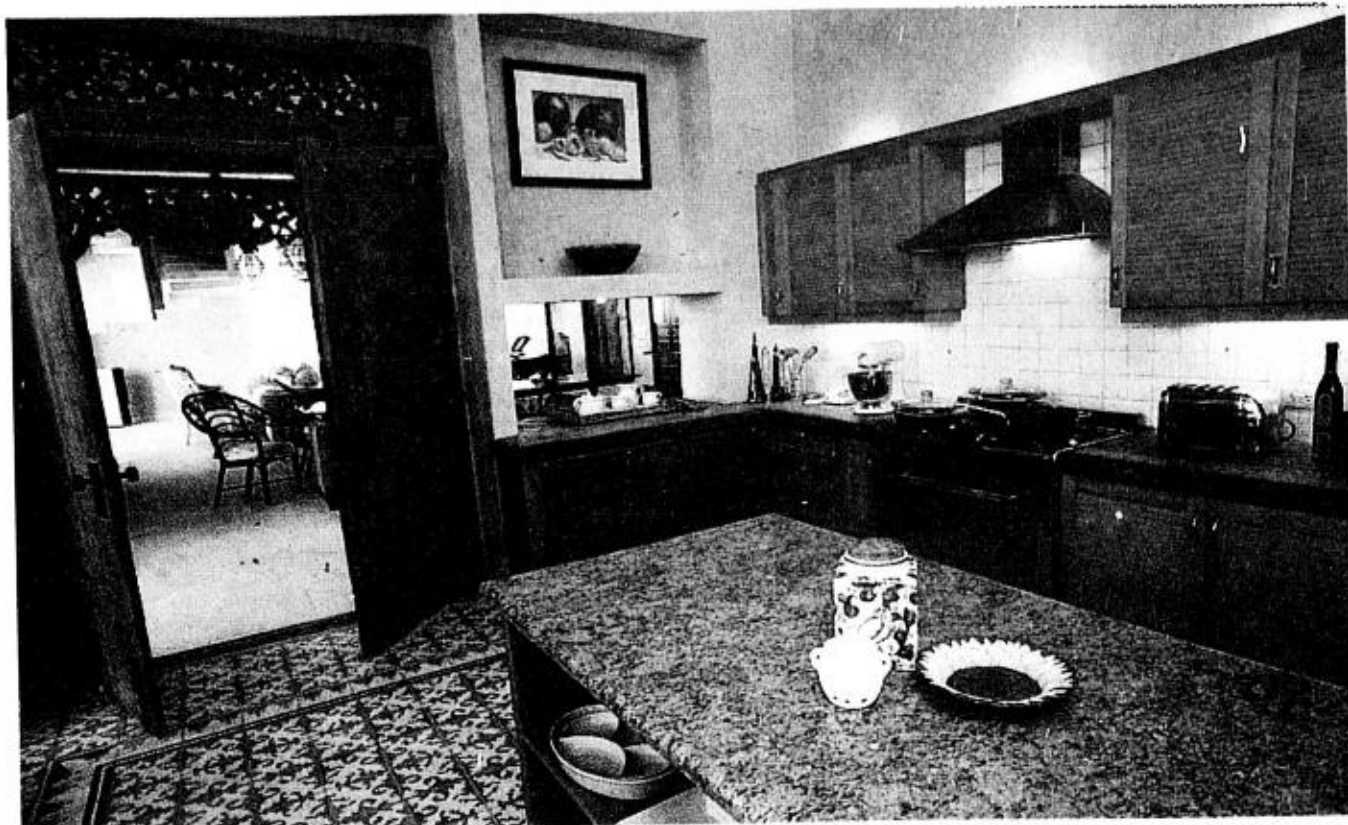
Any adult would certainly get intimidated to see how little children are able to solve mathematical equations without the aid of a calculator, pen or paper...and all in just a matter of seconds!

But aside from dramatically improving Math skills, children trained in A.L.O.H.A. also do well in other subjects because the method maximizes both logical and creative faculties of the brain. They likewise develop a very positive attitude towards learning in general, as they continue to boost their self-confidence.



Start your child on his way to a future of mental prowess, confidence and personal development. Call 244-70-41 to 43 for more information.

ALOHA



LIZZIE Zobel and Rafael Calero collaborated in this kitchen, inspired by the Colombian farmhouse, in Calatagan. The Indonesian-carved door compliments the Machuca tiles. Calero uses natural materials such as granite tops, solid wood cabinetry, painted concrete walls and partitions. The look is modernized by stainless steel appliances.

Cooking up the kitchen

(From page C4)

Sizing up the kitchen

"When I meet clients, I get to know their life-style, the number of [their] kids. Do they entertain? What are their cooking or baking preferences? Do they drink wine? Do they want a kitchen that's modern, traditional or Asian? I find out the appliances they'd be interested in," Calero says.

"For example, if they love to fry food, I'd recommend a certain high-powered range or a cook top with a high-powered hood that picks up the grease that's floating when you're frying. I work within the specs of the appliances. It's easy for me to come up with a design. [I determine if] they have room for goodies like a trash compactor, wine chiller, under-counter refrigerator, bread warmer. From there I work around the cabinets, and the pantry comes in."

The kitchen should elicit in the users a primordial pleasure. It should satisfy hunger not only for food, but also for company and visual interest.

"In the end you have to come up with a kitchen that the homeowner is happy with and would love to show to their friends," says Calero.

He observes that kitchens in the Philippines are larger than those in San Francisco. There's even an auxiliary kitchen or dirty kitchen adjoining the main one.

"In the States, because the kitchens are smaller, it's more challenging to make them. You have to make it functional with a small amount of available space. Some designers include a folding or retractable nook for accommodation," he says.

Favorites

Some of his favorite projects include the kitchens of Jaime Augusto and Lizzie Zobel de Ayala in Makati and Calatagan.

Since Lizzie loves to cook, bake and entertain, the kitchen becomes the hub of the house. This space is simple in execution and uses industrial fittings. The sea blue and sunny yellow colors of the walls and vivid Machuca tiles contrast with the steeliness of the professional-style equipment and units.

The kitchen, which is adjacent to the patio where the Zobel's entertain, features heavy-duty customized appliances such as the stainless steel-framed and the 60-inch six-burner cooktop with a grill. The backsplash is a wide band of stainless steel that rises up beneath the extractor hood. Echoing the industrial theme are the ergonomically designed stainless steel handles. A stainless steel hanging shelf is set above the island where the food is prepared.

A galley features wall glass cabinets and felt-lined drawers for the flatware. A busy kitchen like this would need a wine chiller, an ice dispenser and a warming pan. The lighting is warm since the client is particular about halogen.

In the Zobel residence in Calatagan, Calero blends modern and functional equipment in a South American-inspired country setting. The client's penchant for simplicity is shown in the clean lines and finishes. However, the bamboo walls, the Indonesian carved wooden door and concrete counter top have traditional recollections that lend visual warmth. The island unit has a work surface of granite while the other countertops are made of concrete. Adding modernity are the copper and zinc faucets and the customized butcher's block.

The poolhouse has another kitchen that repeats the same theme—bamboo, Machuca tiles and big pantry cabinets.

The Zubiri kitchen in Metro South uses expensive materials such as medium-stained oak, synthetic stone and Italian tile flooring. It's got a trash compactor, a built-in ref with an integrated panel and a double oven. It's got oak-framed lighting above the island, under-cabinet lighting and added fixtures on top of the sink.

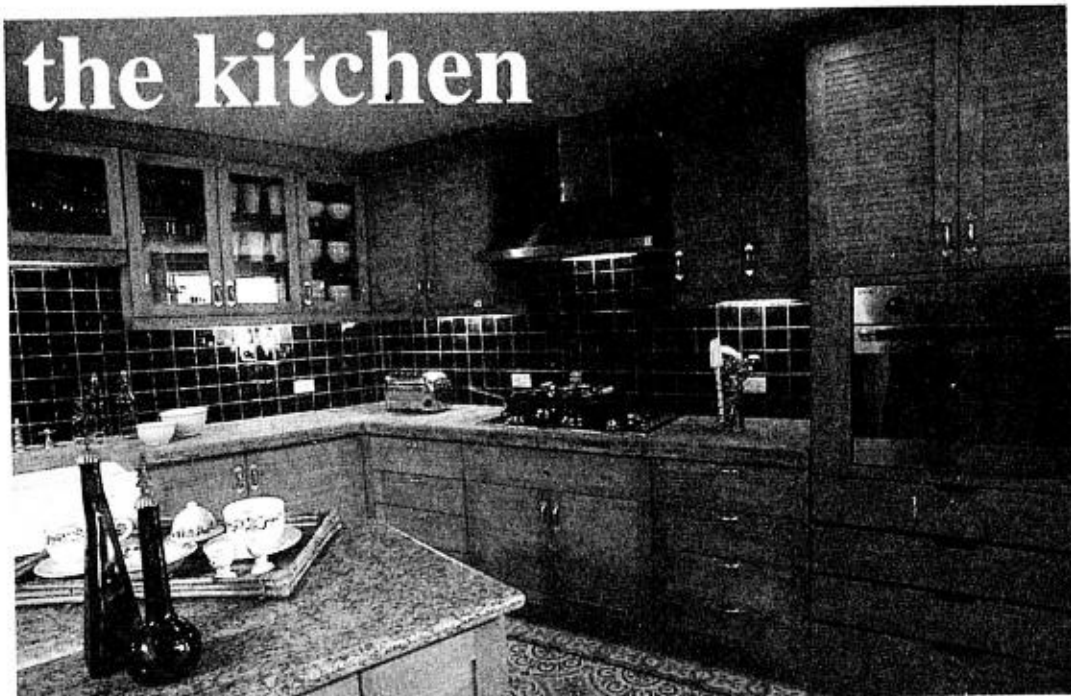
Calero's clients seem recession-proof. But he clarifies, "If somebody has a budget, we're willing to work within it. After all, I'm passionate about the kitchens that I do. I'd be glad to do the kitchen for anybody."

Marge C. Enriquez

The Kitchen Studio is at 23/F Summit One Office Tower, 530 Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City, tel. 718-0148 to 52 and 534-3558 to 59



PICTURE window above the concrete countertop makes food preparation a fabulous experience.



KITCHEN in the poolhouse has the same formula of functionalism, country-style.

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Jollibee

JOURNAL

January 26, 2001

Jollibee brings cheers to Haligi Ng Bata



Invited guests and children have fun with some art materials.

Last Christmas, the Jollibee LRC Group, franchisees of Jollibee, joined Caltex Philippines in bringing Yuletide cheers to the children of Haligi Ng Bata, Inc. (HBI) through the "Aguinaldo Ko Sa Iyo" outreach project. HBI is a charitable institution located in Isadora Hills, Quezon City which houses orphaned, abandoned, physically abused and indigent children.

Jollibee, Hetty and Champ. During the event, invited guests volunteered to be foster parents for a day as they had fun painting pots and making clay figures with the children.

The main highlight of the event came when Santa Claus arrived and distributed gifts to the children. The Jollibee mascot, meanwhile, fed them with their favorite Chickenjoy and Regular Yum.

Jollibee officials led by Jollibee regional business unit head for Mega Manila Iyoh Villamayor, Caltex Philippines officials, TV personalities Richard Merck and Suzi Entrata graced the special occasion. The program started with a modern dance interpretation of the Ati-atihan followed by choir-singing and parlor games led by



Hetty and Champ cheer on the children during the relay contest.

Alay Pagmamahal held for abandoned children



RSCC children play games during the Jolly Kiddie Party.

Selected Jollibee stores in Mega Manila recently treated more than 100 abandoned children from the Reception and Study Center for Children (RSCC) to a Jolly Kiddie Party dubbed "Alay Pagmamahal Sa RSCC." RSCC is a non-profit, non-government organization located at the back of SM City North EDSA which houses and takes care of abandoned children.

The event was supported by the entire managing directors, store managers and store management team of Jollibee's Mega Manila District 1 stores. The children welcomed the

Jollibee mascots who treated them to fun games, entertainment numbers and langhap-sarap Jollibee meals. The kids also received special gifts from the participating Jollibee stores.

"Every child deserves to experience a family's love and care. With the Alay Pagmamahal, these children became a part of the Jollibee family. The clothes, toys and books came from personal donations made by the entire Jollibee management and staff of District 1," Jollibee district operations manager Ter Gulay said.

Parañaque welcomes new Jollibee store



Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez welcomes the Jollibee Parañaque Bayan management team.

The management team of Jollibee Parañaque Bayan recently paid a courtesy call on Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez to reaffirm its strong relations with the local government of the city as well as to participate in future civic projects that will benefit the local residents.

Huerta Public Market is now open to serve the people of Parañaque.

During the visit, the team also announced that its new Jollibee store along Quirino Avenue across the La

According to Jollibee South Luzon district operations manager Beth dela Cruz, "We have received a lot of requests from residents to put up more Jollibee stores in Parañaque City. That's why we opened the new store near the La Huerta Public Market so that more people can now enjoy their favorite Jollibee langhap-sarap meals."

For feedback, comments and suggestions, please write to:

Jollibee Journal

c/o the Marketing Division,
Jollibee Center, San Miguel Ave.,
Pasig City
journal@jollibee.com.ph



Jollibee

The dancing Lumad of Mt. Apo

THE ISSUE of ancestral land seems to be a never-ending one in this country. Just a few days ago, this paper reported that the municipal council of Ilogon, Benguet had revoked its endorsement of the San Roque Multipurpose Dam Project, claiming that the tribe most concerned, the Ibalois, was being deceived by the dam's proponents. All over the country, similar disputes continue because of a tribe's fear that allowing such projects would mean they could lose their ancestral land.

Another ongoing dispute involves the PNOG geothermal plant in Mt. Apo, Mindanao. It has made the Lumad dig deep into themselves, their environment and their culture. From the studies made by Albert E. Alejo, S.J. in his book, "Generating Energies in Mt. Apo, Cultural Politics in a Contested Environment" (Ateneo University Press), these tribal communities called Lumad seem to have all but forgotten their

culture and now feel they need to remember it, partly to support their claims that the land is indeed theirs.

Some of the people's self-esteem had sunk so low, according to Alejo, they actually thought they were unworthy of support or even of being made subject of his ethnographic study (Alejo's fieldwork in Mt. Apo took place from 1995-1997). When he prodded them to speak their mind, they at first refused to talk.

Dancing to remember

And then came calls to organize *d'yandis* (solemn rituals held by tribal *datus* to resolve conflicts; in the present case, to defend Mt. Apo against its perceived invaders). By holding their *d'yandi*, the Lumad revived an important landmark in the traditional culture.

Alejo found that learning to dance again was one of the most visible signs of this desire to recapture their culture. So at rituals and family reunions, which became

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda



more frequent, as well as at *d'yandis*, there was more music, more dancing. Inspired by this search for their culture, a *kuglong* (sitar) player even wrote a metaphorical poem in Manobo (with Tagalog and Cebuano translations) about what Mt. Apo meant to him.

Alejo further observes that "[c]ommunal dancing in some contexts generates a feeling of solidarity and stimulates collective action." Part of the importance of dance here is that a change of movement (manifested by dance) may generate a

change of mind.

How important this is to a people "remembering" their culture and what is essentially theirs is reflected in the story of a tribal elder, distressed over the looming possibility of having to sell his land for much-needed money. It was at a family reunion in Kidapawan, Cotabato, that the tribal elder was told that he didn't have to sell his land after all as money in the form of a "miracle donation" had come. The elder brightened up in relief and began to talk, where once he had clammed up, to add to Alejo's research.

He spoke about their customs, "the way they opened up a farm from the forest, and once the forest was cleared, never returned again, and how Mt. Apo was sacred because, like a market, it was the source of all things they needed in life."

Finding their "voice," as it were, the tribes that gather in *d'yandis* stress their main thesis: "that the Lumad of southern Mindanao take their sacred

duty to defend the land that the Creator has lovingly given to their people."

In the *D'yandi Declaration of Principles*, they swear "to fight and die for our sacred ancestral lands which we inherited from our forebears, because the land and our life are gifts from (the god) Magbavaya (who) created this land for the Lumad race to live on and to nourish."

Thus it is that the Lumad also make their land claims in the context of their spiritual beliefs. "Aside from their relationship with Magbavaya, they feel a special intimacy with the land because its river, mountains, forests keep treasured memories of the spirits of their ancestors and heroes. This sacred presence is proof enough that the land belongs to them."

Stories their elders tell of the past were of "peace and bliss." But now, as they face the danger of losing their land and their precious mountain, they have begun to realize that it is mainly through collective movement that they can be given back their land, and their life.

Alejo's book dwells deeply into the different movements of people and places, the complexities of the struggle to retain ancestral land, his many interactions with particular people, and the whole arena of what he calls "political ecology" research. He also discusses in length the "politics of consultation" where family reunions become stepping stones to a rediscovery of their culture.

We have merely tried to touch on the ecological aspects of Alejo's studies which are doubly valuable because aside from their insights into the struggle between developers and traditional inhabitants of a great mountain, they give us a firsthand look at the biodiversity of the area, which Alejo hints at in this statement: "One fantastic forest monument was the Soumayag ni Anus, a huge towering *almaciga* tree, endemic to Mt. Apo, which serves as source for lamp oil. A fallen branch with its juice or sap called *angu* can be used as a torch." We hope the torches continue to light up the way for the dancing Lumad of Mt. Apo.



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the hearts of many



e s s e n s e s

Rustan's

M A K A T I

ESSENSSES —

Dyptique/New Born/Sonoma

HEALING for the body, mind and spirit — the wondrous, magical science of therapeutic aromatherapy — can be had at the newly opened healthy-lifestyle store, Essenses, at the ground floor of the new annex of Rustan's Makati, the one-of-a-kind in place for an upscale young market in search of top-quality heavenly smelling Dyptique scented, fragrances and toiletries — 34, Boulevard Saint-Germain is right here at Essenses.

Celebrities with a burning passion for Dyptique candles include Catherine Deneuve, Karl Lagerfeld, Michael Kors, Elizabeth Hurley and Kate Moss. Donatella Versace would buy an entire stock of Dyptique's fig-scented candles. Sean "Puff" Combs orders as many as 50 of the tuberose-scented ones whenever he's recording in the studio, says it helps him with his music. Tuberose happens to be the most expensive floral ingredient in the world and it's also considered a symbol of dangerous pleasures.

Pleasures, dangerous or not, are the ineffable evocations of Dyptique candles, scented natural sprays and burning essences, which are now available in 45 different fragrances. The subtle flowery, wooden and fruity notes are inspired by nature. Much sought-after scent are Tuberose, Firewood, New Mown Hay and Opopanax. The wood scents have been expanded to include more masculine essences such as broom, leather and waxed wood.

Dyptique candles are the result of environmental inspiration, not marketing strategy. "One meter is not perfume. Our meter is creation," insists director Mohamed Lataoui. Small and independent, the company is not pressured by sales goals or fashion and lifestyle trends, thus affording them creative liberty to create new scents and the leisure to properly develop them.

Dyptique also has a new line of fragrances for home and body. Its eau de toilette and soaps originate from foreign countries like Greece and the Middle East or simply from Provence. A must-have is the rare and refined Vinaigre de Toilette, steeped in extracts of several plants, woods and spices, based on a 19th century recipe.

From New York comes Newborn Essentials, launched in January 1999, which sells nine healing sprays.

These are Breathe (to clear nasal congestion), Clean (to neutralize mold, mildew and odors), Relief (to help headaches subside), Season (to protect from colds and flu), Fresh (to diffuse anger and tension), Mood (to enhance sensuality and life depression), Serenity (to promote sleep and a sense of well-being), Fly-Away (an insect repellent) and Soothe (for relief of sunburn and insect bites). Whether they really heal or not, all the sprays smell really good. You are not getting that raise? Mood or Fresh might help.

Newborn Essentials is the baby of Maria Newborn, a television executive in New York City, who discovered a passion for aromatic oils in 1996, during a period of insomnia. She eventually spent three years doing extensive research on essential oils and applying aromatherapy to her daily life. She quickly learned that the application of essential oils is a way to complement allopathic medicine or in some cases to replace conventional pharmaceuticals altogether.

Her first bottled sprays were marketed in 1998 to friends and family as holiday gifts. Since her products contain no alcohol or chemical additives, the response was tremendous. Everything sold out by Christmas. (Ten percent of her holiday profits went to Tomorrow's Children's Fund, a nonprofit group that seeks cure for childhood cancers and blood disorders). She has since expanded her product line to include bubble bath, shower gel, body lotion, shampoo, massage oil, and a special line of aromatherapy products for the preggie mom.

And from Sta. Rosa California, comes Sonoma Bath Company's Liquid Personalities, a chic line of crystal clear, lightly scented, liquid hand soap available in 30 different personality titles, from the risqué to the tame, among them Web Hog, Nature Lover and Stud Muffin. (If you don't know it yet, Sonoma Bath Company is a division of Fridge Fun!, Inc., the maker of fun refrigerator magnets which have appeared on popular sitcoms such as *Seinfeld*, *Friends* and *Ellen*).

Liquid Personalities intends to allow you self-expression when washing your hands and to deliver a fun message to all of your bathroom-goers. As a gift item, it is also guaranteed to invite conversation and laughter.

At any rate, laughter is the best therapy.

Have both the laughter and the aroma at Essenses of Rustan's Makati where you will also find the best products from prestigious European and American companies with a commitment to protecting the environment and promoting natural health and beauty. These include Soulful Therapy System, Mad Gab's, Hey Slick, Ella Mikao Design, Sense of Space Creations, Natural Cosmetology Laboratoire Nuxe, Diego Dalla Palma, Serge Louis Alvares, Girl Cosmetics. Essenses also has a tea bar, a wellness library and a treatment room.

ADVT.



HISTORIC moment

PHOTOS BY QUINCY CASTILLO

The best and the worst of Edsa 2

JUST when you thought you were back to normal FM music on the drive home at night, after days and nights of heart-stopping AM news on the radio, your car is stopped by the PNP—checkpoint, "gun ban check," the Blue Boy tells you. Just that morning, GMA had her first flag-raising ceremony at Malacanang. Tonight, the air is thick with rumors about a coup. Euphoria over Edsa 2 has yet to die down, but just as strong is this reminder that Edsa (both 1 and 2) is really an unfinished business for us all. We haven't stopped patting ourselves on the back for this second miracle of a lifetime, and yet we know that the people have yet to settle the score fully with the Erap government, and vice versa. We drove out the Marcoses in 1986 just to party with them again years later. You know we'll do the same with Erap and company sooner than we think. Our "niceness" as a people is that predictable.

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson
San Juan



For while People Power is our trademark in the world, so is our short memory.

And so before we fully forget, before we resume our lifestyle—in my case, before I watch Bibot Amador's King Lear this weekend—we must list the best and the worst about Edsa Two Lifestyle, for the archival reference of the generation sure to mount Edsa 3. You have your own list, I have mine.

THE BEST/ p. D3

LIFESTYLE

It is an unfinished business. The next time around, the world may not be as impressed. But for now, the young suddenly want to vote

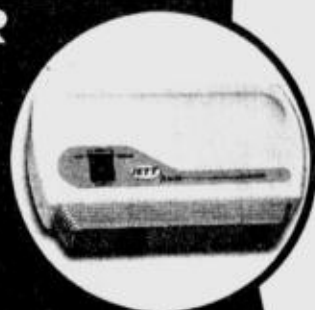
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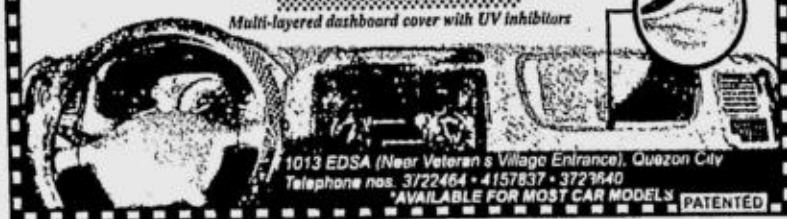
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WITH PRESIDENT Diosdado Macapagal in Santuario de San Antonio. Her wedding gown was made by Pitoy Moreno.



WITH FIRST Lady Eva Macapagal and Pitoy Moreno at a function

Back at where she started

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo returns to the Palace after nearly 40 years. When her father Diosdado became president, the first thing her mother, First Lady Eva Macapagal, announced was a return to simplicity after the pomp and glamour of the former era.

Pitoy Moreno has dressed up the Macapagal family for several decades. To this day, he still makes Gloria's ternos, evening wear, madrina gowns and traveling suits. Unlike her mother who was a fastidious home-keeper and dresser, fashion has never been the priority of Gloria, who is an educator and an economist. So expect her to set the example of substance over form.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo relives her glorious days as a first child back when Malacañang meant substance and simplicity without the sacrifice of style and taste



GLORIA in an organza, traje de mestiza worn during the visit of King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia of Spain in 1964.

When caregivers don't really care

SOME nurses forget they are health-care givers bound by an oath of professionalism and service. As nurses, they cannot afford to overlook or disregard doctor's orders because it could mean the patient's life or death. But a few of them do, as explained in the letter of Bing Parel-Salud of Northwest BF Homes, Parañaque.

She wrote: "My 10-year-old daughter was confined last Jan. 7 at the University of Perpetual Help-Rizal Medical Center for respiratory tract infection and UTI. On Jan. 10 at about 7 a.m., a batch of nurses peeked into the room (No. 201), supposedly to check on the patient's condition. It was only after they left when I found out they overlooked my daughter's empty dextrose bag. It took quite a while before a nurse came. She had to ask, 'Eh, madam, idi-discharge na ba 'yung bata? Kasi pwede huwag nang bigyan ng dextrose.' She obviously didn't

check the medical chart.

"The dextrose bag was replenished but the nurse had to aspirate the air which subjected my daughter to a lot of pain... That was not the first time we experienced a nurse's unprofessional behavior. Three months ago, my daughter was confined at the fourth floor (of the same hospital). The nurse failed to monitor the fever for over six hours and it hit close to 40 degrees. At another time, the IV needle was dislodged and the nurses did not immediately do anything until the skin was swollen. My daughter was in pain.

"The only reason we go to this hospital is because they have good doctors, especially Dr. Conrado Manalad, a pediatrician who treats children, not as simple patients but as people."

Salud also called the attention of the hospital administrator to the "busted intercom in room 201, the noisy air-conditioner and swarm of

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron



ants that visit in the afternoon." She pointed out, "For the P1,200 plus-plus room rate, patients deserve better condition."

We want it known that we tried several times to get the assurance of the hospital director to look into the complaints. A copy of the complaint was faxed to the director's secretary and we called her up several times.

The complaint of Ms Salud reminded us of our own experience. I saw recently how a nurse of St. Luke's

hospital switched the brands of a prescribed medication without the permission of the patient's doctor. I also saw how the nurse on duty overlooked the empty IUV of the patient, our brother. These two irresponsible ones don't deserve to be on the same league as the competent nurses of St. Luke's hospital.

Praises for doctor do-gooder

Aren't the diabetics of Parang, Marikina lucky to have a doctor looking after them on Saturday mornings? Despite his busy clinic days at the hospital, Dr. Ronald Ordoñez devotes a few hours of his time monitoring sugar levels and giving free medical checkup at the public playground. Sometimes, his doctor friends and diabetics experts also volunteer and give lectures. He has one regret, however. "Diabetes is increasing in my home-

town as proven by the increasing number of patients that come to our Saturday diabetic's lab," he said.

Diabetics' organization

Sometime ago, we received the following letter from Rolando Mateo of 48 Kapitán Miyong, San Roque, Marikina. He wants fellow diabetic sufferers to know about the Diabetics' Organization of Eulogio Rodriguez (Doers), a project of the Amang Rodriguez Medical Center.

He wrote: "Doers hold clinic at the center every Friday from 6-9 a.m. The aim is to help and educate diabetics on the proper care and treatment of the disease. Available services include blood sugar and cholesterol tests, ECG, eye examination, blood pressure and weight monitoring, as well as treating and dressing wounds. We are also advised on proper diet and exercises. Moreover, medical technologists and

representatives of drug companies lend their support to us.

"Doers was founded 10 years ago by Dr. Araceli V. Pano, an internist diabetologist. Because of her efforts in coordinating with different drug companies, we are able to buy our medicine at a discount. In addition to her support, ARMC director Dr. Ruben Flores made efforts to give Doers members a 20-percent discount on hospitalization. All indigent members of Doers are given free hospitalization (excluding medicine)."

By the way, Dr. Pano is president of the Consortium of National Diabetes Congress.

New e-mail addie

We have a new e-mail address! Those who sent letters to our old address in the past three weeks can resend their comments and complaints to mgiron@csi.com.ph.

The best and the worst of Edsa Two

(From page D1)

what I choose to remember.

My Best list:

- **The People.** Their spontaneity. Their commitment. Their unrestricted anger and humor. Their infinite variety (rich and poor, young and old, Right and Left, straight and gay). Edsa 1 built up slowly needing a call from the Atom boys and Cardinal Sin. Edsa 2 was an instant swell of humanity even before the clock could strike 12 Tuesday night. And once you joined the crowd, you couldn't move, you were carried by its sheer force. You suffocated.
- **The power of telecom.** Text messaging did it. It's an addiction any naughty government would have to contend with from hereon. Curiously, Edsa was a dead site all those days. And when it was all over, you got a text asking you to stop and take a break from text messaging—"so pass this on to your friends."
- **Young people everywhere.** As the night wore on, they turned Edsa into one big rave. They came wearing their glow sticks; you came with your fan and umbrella. At 1 a.m., they were just beginning to rev up; you were hankering for the floor of Robinsons Galleria. Age does matter.

Yet you knew this wasn't all "gimmick" for the young. Over the weekend, I got e-mail from some young readers asking that they be given another chance to register for the coming elections, for they missed the December registration date, which they complained wasn't properly played up by

Comelec. They want to be empowered. They have this sudden urge of citizenship now. They feel responsible for their country.

- **The banners and placards.** Again, the young carried the wildest and most irreverent. You could mass-produce a compilation of these for posterity, which Miriam and Tessie, if they know what's good for them, must buy out.
- **Moral values.** Edsa 1 was a revolution to topple a dictatorship. Edsa 2, Katrina Legarda rightly put it, was a revolution for moral values.
- **The MRT.** The fastest way to Edsa. Edsa 1 didn't have this convenience. Some Makati matrons I know couldn't be stopped by the gridlock; they took the MRT. When, upon reaching the Ortigas Stop, they were suspiciously barred by the MRT guards from passing through and given the lame excuse that the turnstile wasn't working, they hopped over the turnstile and the bar. The Great MRT Escape, I call it.
- **The Second Envelop.** After President Estrada announced that he had already advised his lawyers to allow the opening of the second envelop, Eggie Apostol (Pinoy Times) told me on the phone, "But I already opened it for him."
- **Danny Javier's "walis."** This indefatigable and undaunted Apo was seen sweeping Edsa one early morning at the height of Edsa 2. Gives you hope that there's a solution to Metro Manila's trash crisis.
- **Shining moments for some lawyers.** In the Senate hall and on TV. I

never thought Law could be explained until then.

- **Loren Leviste shining even without her pashmina.** Until she began asking the right questions, I never thought Loren would be known beyond her pashmina.
- **Joker Arroyo not claiming his moment of glory onstage.** While he labored through the Trial, showed human stress and superhuman conviction, he never made a grab for the limelight on Edsa. To me, that's a feat for a politician.
- **"He's not a member of this Court."** Said while gritting his teeth. I don't regret having voted for Raul Roco. He showed firmness without having to insult a witness.
- **Perfect timing.** The generals and Orly Mercado in Gucci-like black.
- **"He beat me up."** According to lawyer Katrina Legarda, six out of eight women in this country are battered wives. When La Aunor said this, the "masa" connected.
- **The mortality of Cardinal Sin.** The Cardinal isn't getting any younger. Even if only for his sake, we cannot afford an Edsa 3.
- **GMA at flag-raising with Malacanang employees.** It was a most appropriate first presidential act, if only because the plight of the civil servants must be among the most neglected issues in this country. They have been robbed of their sense of worth in good governance. That GMA wore no-frills tailored separates was also good. You hope that it's a sign she'll be bringing—neither pomp nor glamour—into the presidency, but a lot of hard work.

Now, my Worst List:

- **Bad timing.** Tatad putting out a newspaper ad asking Erap to resign—the morning after Edsa 2. Cheap shot.
- **Slapstick.** Revilla asking for a reconsideration of his vote, or for a recount—also the morning after.
- **Tragedy.** Jaworski the sports hero being shoved by the Edsa crowd.
- **Not the end.** Edsa 2.

The rest of the worst, I don't really want to remember. Don't we all want to return to a productive lifestyle?

The world is remembering us for our People Power. For now. But the next time around, when comes the need for an Edsa 3 because we have chronically failed to settle an unfinished business, and just keep on changing people without changing our political and values systems, the world may not be impressed at all. Our Edsa will be the biggest joke.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph

Natasha's
DECEMBER

BEST of the BEST

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Gilda De Guzman
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BLACK Friday

That sense of newness

Our souls are exhausted, surfeited. The beautiful world waits to be seen in all its raw freshness if you just have eyes to see

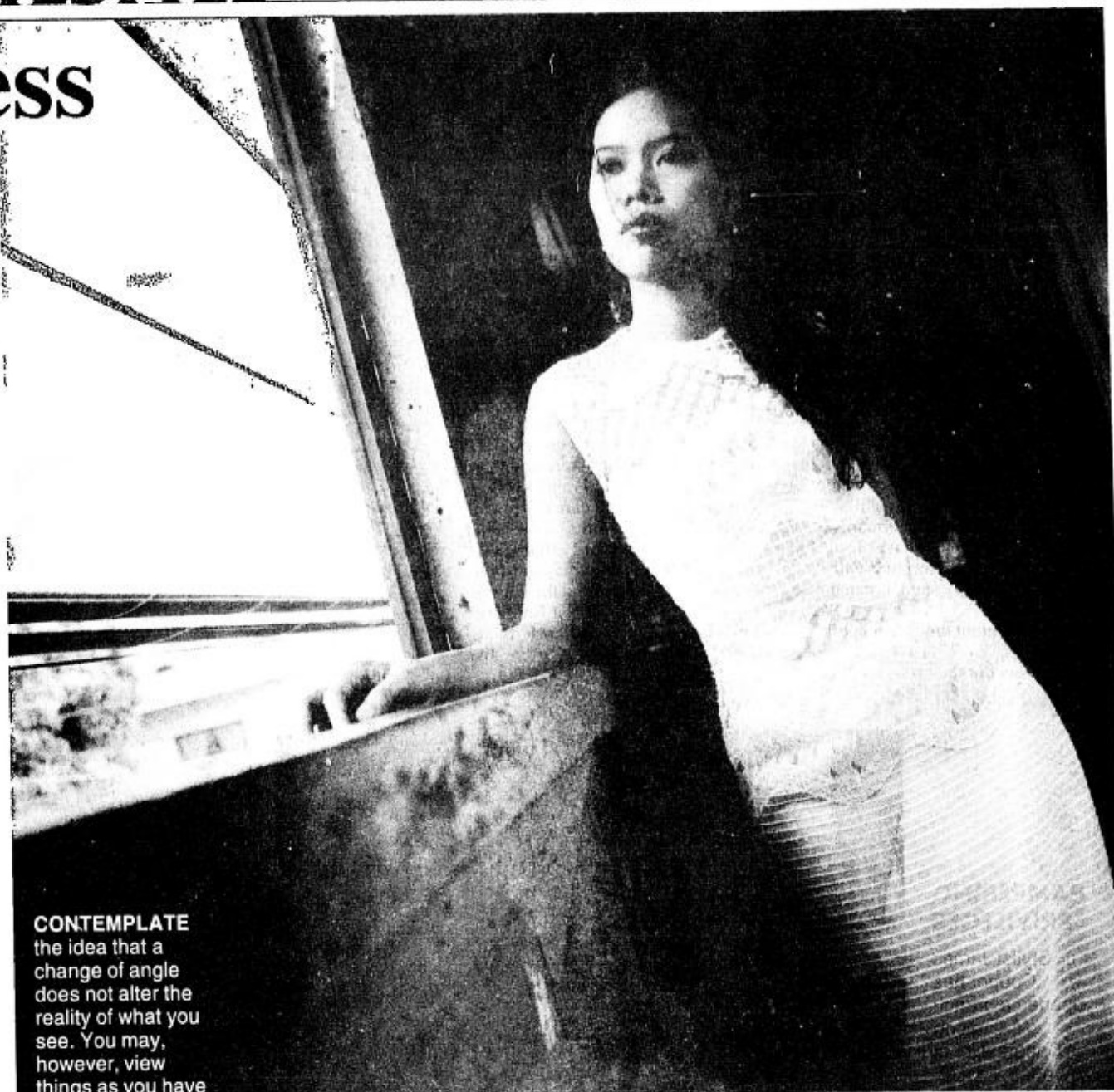
PHOTOS BY JOHN MOSSIGE

WE are creatures of habit. When we stroll along a familiar street, we no longer record its features: our perceptions become jaded. However, we can recreate the sense of newness. Although it may not bring us closer to spiritual realities, it will help gird us for seeing things in unaccustomed ways. By breaking out of old habits, we are more open to divine revelation.



TAKE a walk and view the world from a new perspective. Passersby will be upside down and the walls will be seen from the side.

CONTEMPLATE the idea that a change of angle does not alter the reality of what you see. You may, however, view things as you have never experienced them before. Taking time to see things from a fresh perspective offers you rare moments of wonder.



CLOTHES BY FREDERICK PERALTA

LOCATION: VIGAN

Nono Palmos' feast of details

BY HARRIET ANN DY
PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

AS people poured out to Edsa last Friday night, a handful of guests and loyal clients trooped to the Rizal Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Hotel to give their support to Ilonggo designer Nono Palmos as he held his much awaited gala show.

It was a glittering event where he paid homage to nature's bounty—the earth, water, air, fire and love—with an 80-piece presentation that took inspiration from the elements.

His New York-based producer, Centerpoint News, spared no expense in coming up with a tightly woven show. From the matte chocolate brown invitation to the glossy souvenir program with photos by top lensmen Pancho Escaler, Eddieboy

Escudero, Patrick Uy, Ibarra Deri and Henry Ferrer, to the ribbon-shaped N and P logo, and the sumptuous hotel buffet spread, the event was on the one hand a fashion designer's grand society debut, and on the other part a marketing exercise in the grain of top fashion houses abroad.

However young, Nono is no fashion upstart. Known for his clean corporate creations, he has dressed many of the busiest working women today, including celebrities like Dina Bonnevie, who, together with theater actor Jamie Wilson, lent her voice to a 20-minute poetry reading introduction to start the show.

Palmos's forte showed through his tailored single-button, two-toned suits that bravely tethered between sex and sensibility. Gray jackets were mixed with chiffon halter blouses in hothouse pink, spruced up with gumamela and camella brooches. Skirts were slit with box pleats where silk fuchsia fabric peeked through; while fitted trench jackets opened to dramatic hand-painted lining designed by his brother, Jorge Llanes. And for men, brave is the yuppie who would have the confidence to wear hand-painted ties in delicious berry shades of purple and reddish-pink.

Nono capped off this mini-collection with a breathtaking bubblegum pink wedding gown with floral calado design and a fully-beaded piña opera coat matched with a peony-shaped bouquet.

Skin

Skin is obviously one of Nono's favorite details. In Gucci tradition, he proffered a skin-baring all-white, hot pants number with a neckline that hovered just around the navel and cuffs that ended right on the butt. A Nono Palmos logo belt and knee-high boots completed the outfit's punk anthem.

His take on John Travolta's "Saturday Night Fever" outfit was downright edgy; the fire Swarovski crystal tattoo design that licked model Grace Molina's chest added a fiery feel to the white, shoulder-padded jacket, pants and boots. Also taking center-stage were the accessories of PJ Aranador, a longtime friend, neighbor and fellow Ilonggo. They included pylon patch totes with topstitch details, oversized, hand-painted raffia totes and cell phone bags that found home in the models' slim arms.

Aside from Gucci, Courreges was another inspiration, as seen in Nono's space-age white patches sewn together as a micro miniskirt and barely-there banded tops with boots and cutout trainers.

The bridal encore featured panels of fabric sewn together on a wire that wrapped the model's waist. Although brilliant in construction, would-be brides may think twice before wanting to look like walking tables on their big day.

Recurrent theme

This inversely proportional relationship between aesthetics and construction would become a recurring theme in many of Palmos's creations, especially the evening

As Edsa 2 rages, the Ilonggo designer stages his own fashion revolution



MIXING seduction with smart tailoring

gowns. Palmos is a man of many interesting ideas, but an intensive editing session would have given the gowns a sleeker effect.

Take the asymmetric aqua gown with diagonal see-through panels. This body-hugging piece immediately brings to mind Herve Leger's banded masterpieces. This time, however, Nono cut the linear fluidity with a slit and flowing hem.

More successful was a blue and fuchsia strapless gown with fuchsia underlay that provided a stunning contrast to the water droplet cutouts that dotted the gown. The beaded bodice, however, took attention away from the equally beautiful, peacock-inspired necklace—which PJ created by hand-painting tin with pearlescent capiz color and finishing them with aqua-colored glass marbles.

Aside from this, PJ's Swarovski hip belt with square-shaped colored crystals was another winner; as was his chunky mother-of-pearl chokers. It was his idea, too, to put up model Gayle Ong's hair in a beehive and surround it with carnations to match her pink wedding gown. PJ says he came up with over 200 accessories just for the show alone.

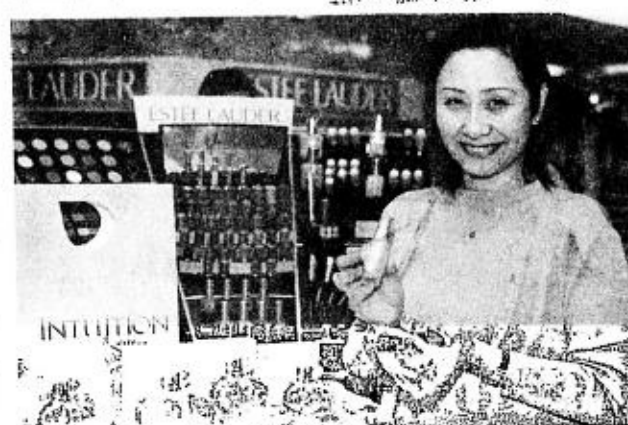
Rich

Just like the accessories that were a feast for the eyes, Nono's gowns were just as rich in details. Paillettes, or oversized sequins, were strung on a red and orange tailored gown for a mermaid effect. A lilac strapless gown with leaf-patterned beaded bodice and eggplant lining is slit on both sides and on the bodice besides. The slit-happy designer slashed bodices and hems with mixed results.

On a more experimental end, the piña went through a style revolution from simply a barong fabric to a striped woven suit. For his wedding gown, Palmos blended piña with gold thread for an empire-cut gown with logo beading.

His painstaking approach to fabric design showed an affectionate familiarity with indigenous materials. Aside from piña, he also transformed hablon, an Ilonggo fabric normally used to weave blankets, which he mixed with silver thread to give birth to bikini and skirt creation.

Little details like these make Nono one of the time-tested designers today. In the same breath, it is details like mixing beads, paillettes, slits and powerful citrus shades that can get singularly original ideas lost in the madness of a well-made gown.



FATIMA Nunez introduces Estée Lauder's skin refinisher.

BETOY JOHNSON

Cosmetic houses have come up with preparations to satisfy women's craving for the elixir of youth

Formulas to forestall aging

IMITATING the fresh, luminous skin of youth is a challenge, but that hasn't prevented anyone from attempting to do so. A young person's skin looks healthy because every two weeks new skin cells push to the surface. The skin is in continuous freshness. As the skin matures, this process slackens. The surface cells, pushing at the limit of their expiration date, become pallid and muddy. Oil glands become less dynamic, and collagen and elastin disintegrate, making the skin less supple. Crinkles turn into wrinkles. The round cheeks of youth become angular as the fat underneath the face gets thinner and the skin starts to droop.

To counter the ravages of aging and bad habits like late nights, poor diet and smoking, cosmetic companies are cashing in on their miracle formulas. Today, it's not enough to cleanse and moisturize. Women are likely to apply acids from fruit or sugar cane to peel off the top layers or use topical preparations from Vitamin A derivatives. "Specifically, women are obsessed with aging and desperately seeking skincare that will provide—at whatever cost—an elixir of youth," wrote British Vogue.

Here's an update:

Clinique's Anti-Gravity Firming Lift Lotion. It contains white birch extract that hinders corrupting influences from disintegrating the protective skin layers. The formula also features an advanced potassium sulfate, cholesterol and epidermal lipid blend that sustains cellular bonds, keeping surface cells healthy and restores the skin's moisture. These ingredients rebuild the important skin lipids and stimulate cell turnover. When protein, an element similar to the skin's natural growth factor, pumps up the skin's collagen production, the skin becomes smoother and more resilient.

As women mature, the hormonal levels become irregular and the skin's capacity to metabolize sugar as energy decreases. Excess sugar amasses outside the cells binding the skin's support system and entangles these fibers, leading to uneven texture, sagging and lines. The amino-vitamin complex controls the excess sugar molecule before they entangle the collagen and fiber.

Special polymers elicit a tightening effect that lasts all day.

Estée Lauder's Idealist Skin Refinisher. Would you like your skin to be as smooth as velvet? In just one application, the skin feels smooth and silky. For those who find the alpha hydroxy acids too harsh, this skin refinisher uses sugar-derived technology that stimulates the skin to exfoliate itself. It offers the same benefits as products using AHA. The sugar-derived ingredients incite the skin's shedding process. Lazy cells slough off naturally, revealing the new skin underneath. The polymers give the skin an instant velvety finish. The cocktail of green tea, caffeine and botanical extracts brightens the skin tone, addressing the redness and the patches. The marine algae extract

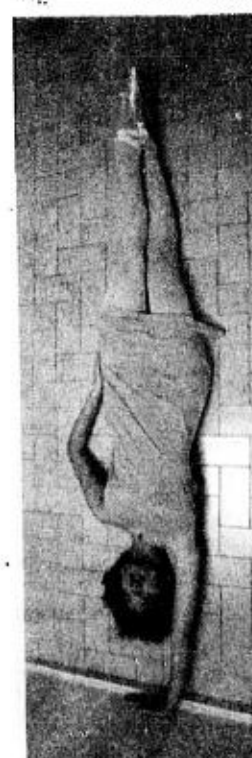


CHRISTINE Leong of Clinique with Rustan's executive Ramon Roxas at the launch of Anti-Gravity

JOAN BONDUG

helps balance the excessive oiliness. Sodium hyaluronate, a moisture magnet, keeps the skin continuously moisturized.

Elizabeth Arden's Good Morning Skin Serum and Good Night Restoring Cream. The morning serum contains phytoclar, a botanical complex that brightens dull skin; grape seed and grape extract that even out the skin tone, avocado and birch extract to blur the disappearance of fine lines. The evening cream is made of desert plant extracts that protect the skin from moisture loss, shea butter, evening primrose oil as natural fatty acid for skin conditioning, sea parsley extract for skin refreshing properties and lavender, honey-suckle, bitter orange peel for their calming effects.



AFTER A CERTAIN age, the skin and muscles succumb to gravity. A woman needs to resist it.

Clarins' Renew-Plus body Serum. Touted as the first age-defying treatment for the body, this formula contains plant-activated pre-retinol, the most stable molecule of retinol. It prevents the horny layer from becoming too thick; it increases the living layer of the epidermis and improves the dermal layer by stimulating the collagen synthesis. The white fity has moisturizing properties that promote supple skin. Its high Vitamin C and nerve-regulating action content helps distress the skin. Wintergreen eliminates the dead skin cells and refines the skin texture. The olive helps restore the hydrophobic film. Cashew nut extract helps preserve the skin's circulation and minimizes blemishes.



DEFT use of local fabrics



PALMOS with his model wearing a logoed gown

Be yourself in fashion

THE YEAR of individualism and freedom, flashy colors and unconventional styles, fashion and glamour, all rolled into one.

Cinderella suggests no rules this year, meaning, wear what you want and cherish it. Young brands Naf Naf Paris, Mickey Unlimited and SYC (Seventeen Young Co.) play around with history, '70s and the '80s genre. Tees with printed words as design are important to teens because this gives them the chance to express themselves in whatever way possible. You can ramp and strut from the utmost casual jeans and shirts to the high-fashion halter top paired with hot pants, hoop earrings and two-toned shades with rhinestones, similar to what your grandmother used to wear to protect her eyes from UV rays (years back!).

Mickey Unlimited for guys and San Francisco offer the comfy yet on-the-go mood. Drawstring pants paired with Raglan cut shirts are on top of the list. Skater pants, poles, fisherman's hat and baseball cap are some of the must-haves for the guys. Young men can also try accessorizing with SYC cuffs and chain belts, and comfy sandals can now replace your favorite sneakers.

Prints of different kinds from polka dots to plaids and from floral to abstract are your top picks. SYC for gals revisits the '80s with its glam collection for

parties and gimmicks. Esprit, BritishIndia, Sisley and Kookai are up for a whirlwind of colors from hot pink, aqua, bloody red, purple, orange and camel.

For summer, get your bikinis and tank tops for that beach tour. Beaded thongs and wooden slip-ons are perfect for an afternoon of water fun. Sarongs, wraparound skirts, native and plastic bags are your handy man this season.

Even kids can be a little fashionable this year. Colors are as attractive as for the adults and cuts are the smaller versions. Pants, skirts and minidresses paired with hats and handbags will make your girls more precious than ever. Check out Cinderella Kids, Oshkosh B' Gosh, Barbie and Cinderella Dresses. Young boys can run as fast as they can wearing cut-off pants paired with polos and hooded shirts, all from San Francisco Boys.

If you dare to see what fashion will be in the next few months, visit Cinderella and enjoy a sneak preview of Fashion 2001. Avail of 70-percent off on selected items until Feb. 12 in all Cinderella outlets and check out the latest in fashion from SYC, Mickey Unlimited, Naf Naf Paris, BritishIndia, Esprit, Sisley, Kookai, Oshkosh B' Gosh, Healthtex, Cinderella Kids, Pierre Cardin, JAPS, San Francisco and Red Earth.

PAMPERING PRIVILEGES

Stylist James Cooper has opened a branch along Congressional Avenue, Proj. 8, QC. Sincerely C. Te holds the franchise of this salon. It offers foot scrubs, nail care and the latest from Hollywood, airbrushed makeup for a perfect look.



Lecture-demos on plant

TO MARK the silver anniversary of the Philippine Horticultural Society, lecture-demonstrations on the different aspects of ornamental gardening will be held daily at Greenhouse No. 1, Manila Seedling Bank, Edsa corner Quezon Avenue, QC.

The lecturers are: Shirley Sanders, "Landscaping," Jan. 27; Mody Manglicmot Jr., "Advance Techniques in Bonsai Culture," Jan. 28; Willie Ortaliz, "Corsage Making," Jan. 29; Serapion S.

Metilla, "Dishgardening and Terrarium-making," Jan. 30; Dr. Araceli Ladilad, "Horticulture Perlite in Container Gardening," Jan. 31; Ray Ong, "The Use of Fertilizers," Feb. 1; Baby Spowart, "Orchid Culture for Profit," Feb. 2; Fred Salud, "Bromeliad Culture," Feb. 2; and Fely Gupit, "Bonsai—Saiki and Suiseki (Stone Appreciation)," Feb. 3.

Some giveaways will be raffled off to participants after the demonstrations.

Go on a food trip

WITH MORE than 28 years in the food service industry starting out in Tarlac City, Cindy's Bakery & Restaurant grew to stretch its operations in different provinces and cities in Central and Northern Luzon as operated by Multiple Achievements Corporation.

Cindy's Bakery & Restaurants offer bakeshop products and meals of quality and value aimed at

satisfying all members of the family. With this firm principle for quality and service characterized by genuine country hospitality, Cindy's has established and maintained a broad market following which enabled it to expand to the far reaches of Luzon.

Cindy's Bakery & Restaurant is an independent operation from "Cindy's" stores now operating in Metro Manila.

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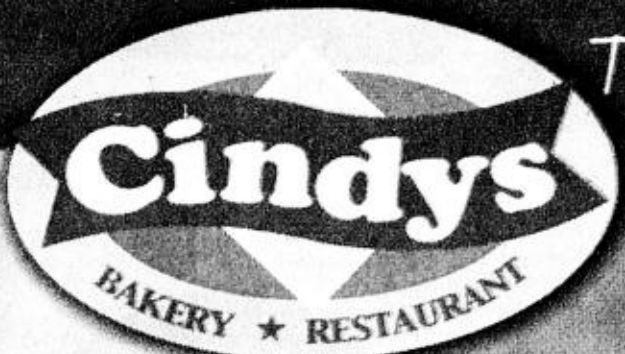
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Isabela - Alicia, Cauayan (2), Ilagan, San Mateo, Roxas, Santiago City (2) • **Nueva Ecija** - Cabanatuan City • **Pampanga** - Angeles City, Apalit
Pangasinan - Alaminos, Mangaldan, Tayug, Urdaneta • **Tarlac** - Camiling, Paniqui, Tarlac City (6), Victoria • **Cagayan** - Tuguegarao City • **Zambales** - Olongapo City

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1st Draw 3pm, Saturday March 10, 2001 North Edsa

2nd Draw 3pm, Saturday April 7, 2001 Ortigas

Deadline for submission of entries:

Closing store hour of March 3 & March 31, 2001



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